

LINCOLN
and the Land of
THE SANGAMON



LOUIS OBED RENNE

LINCOLN and the Land of the Sangamon

By

LOUIS OBED RENNE

A biography written with understanding and sincerity revealing the author's close intimacy with the Lincoln country where the great "Emancipator" lived and labored during thirty years of his career. Mr. Renne's personal recollections of William Henry Herndon, Lincoln's last law partner, and the observations of his relatives who lived along the Lincoln trail where he was born and reared, prompted him to write this brief biographical chronology, including a reminiscent sketch of the Sangamon Valley countryside.

The author's motive in adding another book on this well-loved subject to the many volumes already listed was that he might supply what he believes to be a lack of important items relative to the man and the environment.

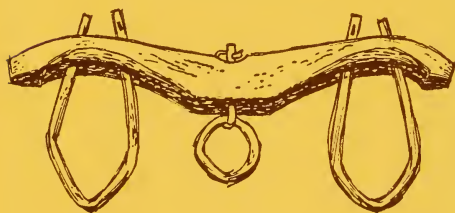
Eight illustrations.

LINCOLN
AND THE LAND OF
THE SANGAMON

LOUIS OBED RENNE

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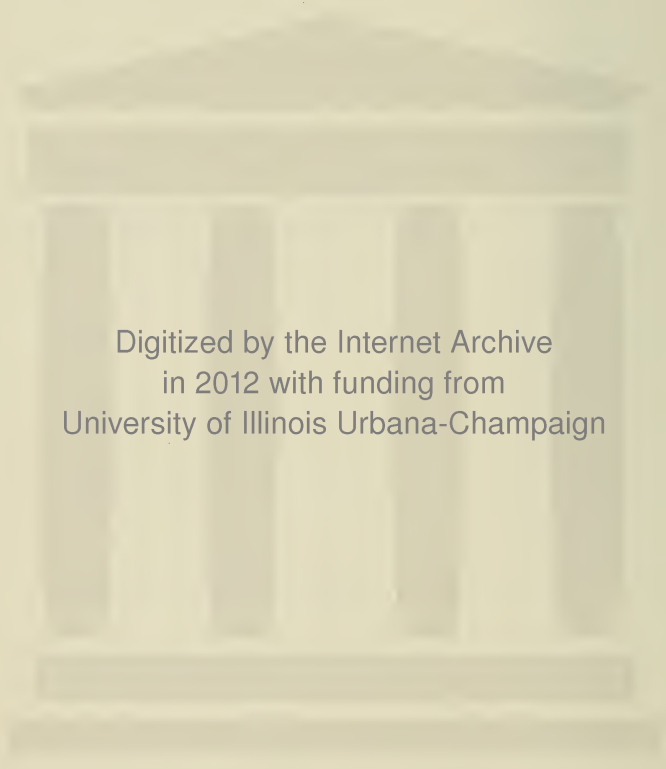
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LINCOLN AND THE
LAND OF THE SANGAMON





THE LINCOLN PICTURE THAT HUNG
IN THE HERNDON LAW OFFICE

LINCOLN AND THE LAND OF THE SANGAMON

By

LOUIS OBED RENNE

Author of "The Old Mill" and Other Sketches



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Amelia Rumbold

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TO
THE MEMORY OF MY MOTHER
With love and gratitude

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PREFACE

Some future, patient, persevering student of Lincoln may discover obscure facts in isolated places, and write a more excellent and comprehensive narrative than has been written,—perhaps a day-by-day account of this true brother to the lowly.

Doubtless no two persons agree entirely on what is most significant in revealing the character and ethics of Abraham Lincoln, though every observation of his life contributes to our knowledge of the man. Mythical, legendary, and verified anecdotes have been interwoven from Hardin County to Sangamon; nevertheless, his Civil War years have been well authenticated and recorded by diligent biographers and distinguished historians.

Observations of my relatives who lived along the Lincoln trail, where I was born and reared, and personal recollections of William Henry Herndon, prompted me to write a brief biographical chronology including a sketch of the Sangamon Valley countryside, where Lincoln lived and labored during thirty years of his career, in the hope that it may be helpful to students and the general public.

Perhaps we all tend to deify some favorite among the sons of men; we may be carried to the realm of veneration in contemplating the life and deeds of mortals who stood in the vanguard of their time. In our fancy we create a sanctuary, and pay homage to our ideal. If this short volume over-estimates Lincoln's honor and contribution to humanity, it is because, in delving into the voluminous writings that relate to his life, I failed to find substantiated evidence of any act wilfully unwholesome to sully his name.

Abraham Lincoln was a lowly mortal made great through integrity. His dauntless constancy and deliberate judgment, his regard for the common man, and veneration of God, his devotion to duty, and the achievement of his life work make him eternally near the hearts of men the world around.

L. O. R.

LINCOLN AND THE
LAND OF THE SANGAMON

I

A blend of mirth and sadness, smiles and tears,
A quaint knight-errant of the pioneers:
A homely hero born of star and sod;
A peasant prince; a masterpiece of God.

—WALTER MALONE.

Men are worthy of the name only by virtue of having risen above the lower forms of life in their conduct. A man becomes great only in the degree that he holds under subjection his personal, inordinate desires through consideration of his fellow men. A genius may rise above his fellows in accomplishment; his ingenuity may revolutionize the order of things. A shrewd man may fill his coffers with gold. But if these men of mental endowment make no contribution to the spiritual and social welfare of struggling humanity "their works are nothing; their molten images are wind and confusion."

From Creation, security has been the quest of the sons of Adam. We see them down through the ages contending among themselves and with the forces of nature, vying for supremacy; now guided by the stern, judicious leadership of Moses; now led in ruthless conquest by a Thothmes or a Napoleon; now swayed by an eloquent Demosthenes or a Webster. The broad panorama of history reflects the ceaseless struggle of conflicting interests, and the subordination of brotherhood. Throughout the centuries predatory man has sown the wind and reaped the whirlwind. We see relentless hordes sweeping over the earth establishing mighty dynasties and empires which rise and fall in the course of time. We see liberty-loving people of the

“old world” seeking freedom and security in the “new continent” where they build a nation, and consecrate it in the name of liberty and equality.

In this “Land of the Free” factories and prisons are built; churches and schools, distilleries, breweries, and other agencies established with their counteractive influences; enslavement of the Negro is legalized; religious bigotry prevails; railways invade new territory from which the native red man is driven, his just inheritance of forests, fields, lakes, and streams confiscated after a tragic, unequal contest which leaves an ineffaceable blot on the record of the invading Caucasian. Thus the subjugators of a race unleashed the spirit of aggression, and extended the foundation of their social and economic order on the hunting grounds of the vanquished, and denied to defenseless men the “inalienable rights” which were fundamental in the Constitution.

In this dark and turbulent age a tumult arose from the land which threatened the life of the republic; it pervaded the prairies and resounded over the distant mountains; it penetrated the deep, dark forests, and reached from sea to sea; it ascended to heaven! It was a cry of mingled coercion and distress, of contentious rancor.

The far-reaching cry was heard by an offspring of the remote, wild woods of Kentucky. He emerged from the hills, and his proclamation reverberated throughout the land, “that nation conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that ‘all men are created equal’ shall have a new birth of freedom.”

Abraham Lincoln, 1809-1865, sixteenth president of the United States of America, was born in a small log cabin in the backwoods of Kentucky.

Lincoln's concise autobiography, as written in a letter of 1859, to his friend, the Honorable Jesse W. Fell, of Bloomington, Illinois, is pre-eminent among the stories of his life. Mr. Fell, a prominent, influential citizen, Secretary of the Republican Central Committee, seems to have been one of the first to advocate Lincoln for President, and requested his record. Lincoln wrote:

I was born, February 12, 1809, in Hardin County, Kentucky. My parents were both born in Virginia, of undistinguished families—second families, perhaps I should say. My mother, who died in my tenth year, was of a family of the name of Hanks, some of whom now reside in Adams and others in Macon County, Illinois. My paternal grandfather, Abraham Lincoln, emigrated from Rockingham County, Virginia, to Kentucky, about 1781 or . . . 2, where, a year or two later, he was killed by Indians, not in battle, but by stealth, when he was laboring to open a farm in the forest. His ancestors, who were Quakers, went to Virginia from Berks County, Pennsylvania. An effort to identify them with the New England family of the same name ended in nothing more definite than a similarity of Christian names in both families, such as Enoch, Levi, Mordecai, Solomon, Abraham, and the like.

My father, at the death of his father, was but six years of age; and he grew up literally without education. He removed from Kentucky to what is now Spencer County, Indiana, in my eighth year. We reached our new home about the time the State came into the Union (1816). It was a wild region, with many bears and other wild animals still in the woods. There I grew up. There were some schools, so called; but no qualification was ever required of a teacher beyond "readin'," "writin'," and "cipherin'" to the Rule of Three. If

a straggler, supposed to understand Latin, happened to sojourn in the neighborhood, he was looked upon as a wizard. There was absolutely nothing to excite ambition for education. Of course, when I came of age I did not know much. Still, somehow, I could read, write and cipher to the Rule of Three; but that was all—I have not been to school since. The little advance I now have upon this store of education, I have picked up from time to time under the pressure of necessity.

I was raised to farm-work, which I continued until I was twenty-two. At twenty-one I came to Illinois and passed the first year in Macon County, Then I got to New Salem, at that time in Sangamon, now in Menard County, where I remained a year as a sort of clerk in a store. Then came the Black Hawk War, and I was elected captain of volunteers—a success which gave me more pleasure than any I have had since. I went the campaign, was elated, ran for the Legislature the same year (1832), and was beaten—the only time I have been beaten by the people. The next, and three succeeding biennial elections, I was elected to the Legislature. I was not a candidate afterwards. During the Legislature period I had studied law, and removed to Springfield to practice it. In 1846 I was once elected to the lower House of Congress—was not a candidate for reelection. From 1849 to 1854, both inclusive, practiced law more assiduously than ever before. Always a Whig in politics, and generally on the Whig electoral ticket, making active canvasses. I was losing interest in politics, when the repeal of the Missouri Compromise aroused me again. What I have done since then is pretty well known.

If any personal description of me is thought desirable, it may be said, I am, in height, six feet, four inches, nearly; lean in flesh, weighing on the average, one hundred and eighty pounds; dark complexion, with coarse black hair, and gray eyes. No other marks or brands recollected.

Yours very truly,

A. LINCOLN.

HON. J. W. FELL.

In 1860, to an inquiry of J. L. Scripps, of the *Chicago Tribune*, regarding his past, Lincoln replied in his campaign biography: "It is a great piece of folly to attempt to make anything out of my early life. It can all be condensed in a single sentence and that sentence you will find in Gray's

Elegy, "The short and simple annals of the poor'." He said, "The present subject has no brother or sister of the whole or half blood. He had a sister older than himself, who was grown and married but died many years ago, leaving no child; also a brother younger than himself who died in infancy."

Regarding his old home in Kentucky, Lincoln is reported to have said:

Our farm was composed of three fields. It lay in the valley (of Knob Creek) surrounded by hills and deep gorges. Sometimes when there came a big rain in the hills the water would come down through the gorges and spread all over the farm. The last thing I remember doing there was one Saturday afternoon; the boys planted corn in what we called the big field; it contained seven acres—and I dropped the pumpkin seed. I dropped two seeds every other hill and every other row. The next Sunday morning there came a big rain in the hills, it did not rain a drop in the valley, but the water coming down through the gorges washed ground, corn, pumpkin seeds and all clear off the field."

As candidate for the Legislature, in 1832, Lincoln disclaims any prestige of the past in stating: "I was born, and have ever remained in the most humble walks of life."

Although the analysis of time decrees that no individual can stand on the illustrious deeds of his ancestors, neither can he be held down by their transgressions. Abraham Lincoln was a descendant of a notable family notwithstanding the menacing interrogation with which biographers have turned to Lucy Hanks, mother of Nancy, for the missing link in the emancipator's maternal descent. Judicious and humane is the advice of Dr. William E. Barton: "Let him who has done more for posterity than Lucy Hanks 'cast the first stone'." Lincoln is quoted as saying, "I don't know who my grandfather was, but I am much more concerned to know what his grandson will be."

Surely, the adverse criticism of Thomas Lincoln is not

well founded. After considering the record of my great-grandfather and grandfather VanNattan, both of whom were born in Kentucky,¹ I am convinced that higher quality than that of "indolence" was required to live through the pioneer days in those newly explored sections of Kentucky and in other States of the old West.

The libel by some biographers of the President's father as "shiftless" and "indolent" has no logical support, it seems to me. Those early settlers were seeking "The Land of Promise"; theirs was a great adventure; they were analysts; they tested the factors in the wilderness which contribute to productivity and the maintenance of life. Lincoln said, regarding his father's Kentucky migration: "The removal was partly on account of slavery, but chiefly on account of difficulty in land-titles in Kentucky." They moved, some of them, several times, not because of "indolence" or "shiftlessness," but to secure for their families and themselves better living conditions. It is to those tenacious explorers that the subsequent hordes of humankind, moving westward, owe a debt of gratitude for the data established through hardship.

Notwithstanding Lincoln's self-effacing modesty, patient genealogists, with documentary support, have traced his noteworthy ancestry to England. Scions of the House

¹ My great-grandfather, Daniel VanNattan, was born March 3, 1800, in Fleming County, and my grandfather, Joseph VanNattan, Corporal in the "Preacher's Regiment," was born in Fleming County also, March 10, 1821. Great-grandfather Daniel VanNattan moved from Kentucky with his family into Sangamon County, Illinois, in 1825 where he established a home about nine miles northwest of Springfield.

Grandfather, James Sullivan Renne, a veteran scout of the Black Hawk War, and later commissioned to build the "first fort" west of the Mississippi, was a pioneer in Sangamon County, Illinois; his home was adjacent northwest of Springfield across the road west of Camp Lincoln. Recruits from both the VanNattan and Renne families answered Lincoln's call for volunteers. (I take no pride in this fact.)

—L. O. R.

of Lincoln have contributed much to the stability of the American Commonwealth; we see them rendering notable service in various branches of government; we hear the din of those constructive, vigorous pioneers in their struggle with the primitive woods and plains as they till the virgin sod and hew out their homes in the forest, thus paving the way for our modern, multifarious civilization.

Abraham Lincoln, the unassuming "Man of the People," claimed no trophies or laurels from his progenitors to win the acclamation of his countrymen but offered himself from "the most humble walks of life," to serve his country in a time of great tribulation. And the service he rendered humanity manifests the quality of the man, though the question of his vindication in resorting to war to achieve his worthy purpose will haunt the minds of conscientious men to the last generation.

3

Captain Abraham Lincoln, grandfather of the martyred President, had migrated from Virginia into Kentucky in the year 1782 when Thomas was four years old. The pioneer Abraham was killed by an Indian in the spring of 1786. He left a widow, three sons, two daughters, and "1200 acres of land." Thomas Lincoln, father of the President, was a landowner in Kentucky, and moved several times to improve the condition of his family. From Kentucky he moved to Indiana, and thence to Illinois where he died near Janesville, January 17, 1851. Travel was by covered wagon, horseback, and train.

Nancy Hanks Lincoln, mother of the President, died in southwestern Indiana, October 5, 1818. She was a victim of the milk-sickness epidemic which took a heavy toll from the countryside. Her burial place has become a State park, and thus it is preserved from obliteration by an unmindful transient populace.

Mrs. Sarah Bush Johnston Lincoln proved to be a capable, worthy stepmother to young Abraham, and compensated to a marked degree for the loss of his noble mother. Apparently he was a typical, vigorous boy, though taller than his companions.

Abraham was ten years of age when his father remarried, and, doubtless, he and his twelve-year-old sister, Sarah, enjoyed the three playmates that were brought to the crude home by this union. There were Matilda, Sarah, and John Johnston. And there was Dennis Friend Hanks,

cousin of his mother and ten years older than Abraham, who lived with the family for some time.

Mingled with work and play and thrilling experiences with the wild life of the primeval forest was the dearth of necessities. Those were "pretty pinching times," he said. We hear of Lincoln's rescue from drowning in his childhood, but naturally this experience did not prevent him from plunging many times into Rolling Fork, Knob Creek, and Nolin Creek, Kentucky, and into Little Pigeon Creek and Anderson Creek, Indiana. And there was the irresistible Sangamon River at New Salem, Illinois, with its alluring coolness after a day of toil in the sultry season. His muscles were hardened by general farm work. He wielded the axe in Indiana and Illinois, and became famous as a "rail-splitter." His prescribed schooling was of short duration: five brief terms in Kentucky and Indiana: "about four months in all." He was eager for knowledge, and it was his habit in childhood, in inclement weather, to lie on his back by the glowing wood fire in the hearth, and read what books he could get. Stationery was a luxury in his boyhood home, and he would often write and cipher by candlelight on pieces of boards or a "shovel using charcoal for pencil." His stepmother said he did not read much after dark—went to bed early and rose early: "Abe read diligently . . . He read history papers and books and when he came across a passage that struck him, he would write it down on boards if he had no slate or paper. Then he would rewrite it, look at it, repeat it.

"He had a . . . kind of scrap book in which he put all things, and . . . preserved them."

He used his first large fee as a lawyer to purchase, for his stepmother, a one-quarter section farm home in Coles County, Illinois. Her affectionate tribute to his respectful nature is recorded in her impressive words, "I can say . . .

he was a good boy. Abe never gave me a cross word or look and never refused to . . . do anything I requested of him."

Of his mother he said: "My earliest recollection of my mother is sitting at her feet with my sister drinking in the tales and legends that were read and related to us . . . All that I am or hope to be I owe to my angel mother."

On her deathbed she said: "I am going away from you, Abraham, and I shall not return. I know you will be a good boy, that you will be kind to Sarah and your father. I want you to live as I have taught you and to love your heavenly Father."

Herndon declared, "Lincoln read less and thought more than any man in public life in his generation." We are told that he read Bunyan's *Pilgrim Progress*, Aesop's *Fables*, *Life of Henry Clay*, Weems' *Life of Washington*, Ramsey's *Life of Washington*, Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Rollin's *Ancient History*, Franklin's *Autobiography*, Shakespeare, Burns, Byron, Blackstone, Paine's *Age of Reason*, histories of the United States, and the Bible. He said, "I will study, and when the time comes I'll be ready."

Perhaps the forests, hills, and streams of his childhood were factors in the molding of the man, instilling within him a sense of God's plan; a long-range view of life; a vision of the finality of man's temporal existence.

In the summer of 1831, the youthful rustic with his handful of material possessions arrived at New Salem, Sangamon County (now Menard), Illinois, on the westward bank of the Sangamon River. This was to be his home for six years.

The village was an enterprise of the Reverend John Cameron and his uncle by marriage, James Rutledge. The tall, angular Lincoln was well equipped to launch on the

great experience of self-reliance for he was of the nobility of character; of the aristocracy of mentality; honest and resourceful. The young frontiersman made his home at different places in the village, boarding for a while at the Rutledge Tavern.

A deep sadness came into Lincoln's life at New Salem, for Ann Rutledge, whom he loved, passed away at the dawn of her womanhood. The waters of the winding Sangamon as they flowed along the wooded banks called his soul to the spiritual abode of his beloved; the waters along which they had strolled together in the twilight under the oaks and sycamores; the stars above seemed conscious of his solitude.

The following lines, "Ann Rutledge," by Edgar Lee Masters, are inscribed on the granite gravestone of the maid of New Salem near the reconstructed commemorative village:

OUT OF ME, UNWORTHY AND UNKNOWN,
THE VIBRATIONS OF DEATHLESS MUSIC:
"WITH MALICE TOWARD NONE, WITH CHARITY FOR ALL,"
OUT OF ME, FORGIVENESS OF MILLIONS TOWARD MILLIONS,
AND THE BENEFICENT FACE OF A NATION
SHINING WITH JUSTICE AND TRUTH.
I AM ANN RUTLEDGE WHO SLEEPS BENEATH THESE WEEDS,
BELOVED OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN,
WEDDED TO HIM, NOT THROUGH UNION
BUT THROUGH SEPARATION.
BLOOM FOREVER, O REPUBLIC
FROM THE DUST OF MY BOSOM!

JANUARY 7, 1813

AUGUST 25, 1835

Around her grave¹ nature is benign. Spring gives new life to the land beside the Sangamon: the scent of buds

¹ Interred in Concord burial ground—bones exhumed by questionable interest, May 5, 1890, and moved to the Oakland Cemetery at Petersburg. Both sites are rather near New Salem in Menard County.
—L. O. R.

fills the air, and, as summer approaches, from the wildwood come delightful symphonies of mating birds. In autumn the deciduous foliage is colored by the Master Hand with indescribable hues of Illinois Indian Summer, and the winter snows spread over trees and all about a pure enchantment.

4

It was with difficulty that the forlorn Lincoln applied himself to the duties at hand. In his hours of recreation, wrestling, rough-and-tumble combats with the "Clary Grove boys," who became his steadfast friends, were stimulants in his life while he debated and studied grammar, surveying, and law. The home of Jack Armstrong, leader of Clary's Grove gang, was hospitable toward Lincoln, and years after these set-to's he pleaded successfully before the court at Beardstown, May 7, 1858, where "Duff" Armstrong, son of his former wrestling contestant, was freed of the charge of the murder of James Preston Metzker (August 29, 1857). This was the famous "almanac" or "moonlight" case.

He seemed to think the navigation of the Sangamon was important to his success and to that of the community. While candidate for State legislator, March 9, 1832, he said,

. . . it is probable that for the last twelve months I have given as particular attention to the stage of the water in this river as any other person in the country. In the month of March, 1831, in company with others, I conceived the building of a flat-boat on the Sangamon and I finished and took her out in the course of the Spring. Since that time, I have been concerned in the mill at New Salem . . .

In the spring of 1832 he and Rowan Herndon, cousin of William Herndon, piloted the steamboat *Talisman*, on the return trip, from a point near Springfield to Beardstown. This was a test case promoted by Captain Vincent Bogue. The slow, toilsome cruise upstream and down proved the navigability of the winding river impracticable.

His second journey to New Orleans, beginning about the middle of April, 1831, on a freighter he helped build and float over the Rutledge mill-dam—the flat-boat trip promoted by Denton Offut shortly before Lincoln settled in New Salem—presented the greater opportunity for observing the abuses of slavery which intensified his dislike for the institution. He had, previously, when nineteen, as a “hired man,” made the round trip to the gulf port from Indiana. In the meantime he earned his bread by various vocations.

The Offut mercantile business with which Lincoln was connected was not progressing well and soon “winked out.” About this time, in 1832, there was an Indian uprising in northern Illinois led by Black Hawk, a Sac leader of the Algonquins. Lincoln enlisted and was elected captain of volunteers. After the expiration of this enlistment he re-entered twice and served as a private and independent ranger. We understand he saw but little service in the clash, though his argument saved the life of a captured Indian scout who was condemned to be shot by Lincoln’s comrades. His decision, as in the case of a convicted Civil War prisoner, was, “I do not believe that shooting a man does him any good.” In course of three months the insurrection was suppressed, and Lincoln returned to the quaint hamlet of New Salem.

He had entered the race for the State Legislature shortly before the Black Hawk war, and continued in the competition upon returning. Although defeated, he received 277 out of the 300 votes cast at New Salem. Peter Cartwright, circuit riding Methodist preacher, was one of four worthy successful candidates. It was during this campaign that Lincoln made his first political speech, and here he strikes a note that forecasts the stature of a great, conscientious man. He said: “Every man is said to have



Photograph by Will Trainor (1935)

THE OLD WELL ON THE HERNDON FARM

Uncle Norman VanNattan's old home in distant left background. Left to right: Henry Keffner; Louis Obed Renne; his cousin, Mrs. Ethel Bancroft Keffner. (The Lincoln Trail runs through this farm.)



his peculiar ambition . . . I have no other so great as that of being truly esteemed of my fellow-men, by rendering myself worthy of their esteem . . . ”

This was a strenuous period for the ambitious youth in his struggle for existence, and his moods of despondency worried his friends of whom he had many because of his congenial personality, his frank countenance, and fair playing. He was postmaster at New Salem under President Jackson from May 7, 1833, till the discontinuance of the post, May 30, 1836, from the office of which (located in the Lincoln-Berry store and, later, that of Samuel Hill) he “carried the letters in his hat.” He was deputy surveyor in 1833, the wages of which “procured bread, and kept body and soul together.” And in this year the general merchandise business of Lincoln and the intemperate Berry failed. The store was sold to the unreliable Trent brothers who defaulted. (It has been said that William Berry drank too much, and that Lincoln read too much and told too many stories for the good of the trade.) Lincoln assumed responsibility for the indebtedness, and paid the final installment on the “national debt,” as he phrased it, in 1848.

There was a brief courtship in 1836 with Mary Owens of Kentucky who was visiting her sister, Mrs. Bennett Abell near New Salem, but neither Mary nor Abraham seems to have taken the affair very seriously, though Lincoln was serious enough to propose three times. He was no egotist. He said: “I could never be satisfied with anyone who would be blockhead enough to have me.” He quoted the poem, “Oh why should the spirit of mortal be proud!” Lincoln was at this time, 1834 to 1842 inclusive, a Whig member of the Illinois Legislature which convened in the old State Capitol at Vandalia until 1839 when Springfield became the Capital city. He had been prominent at Vandalia as a member of the famous “Long Nine” Assem-

blymen, and had been instrumental in establishing the seat of State government at Springfield.

In the spring of 1837, Lincoln moved to Springfield where the affairs of State went forward in the new State-house, after the session of 1839-40 which was held on the site of the Second Presbyterian Church—217 South Fourth Street, before the completion of the sandstone structure which is now the Sangamon County Court House with added lower floor.

The self-tutored, "mast-fed" law student had just been admitted to the bar, and his license to practice law launched him in his chosen profession. Springfield was his adopted home, and here we find him wending his way upward, in the words of Joseph Fort Newton, "making his way slowly, unhappy, rarely ill, being a man of regular habits; wiry and stalwart, beyond the best of western men."

In 1839 twenty-year-old Mary Todd came to Springfield from Lexington, Kentucky, to live with her sister, Mrs. Ninian Wirt Edwards. The vivacious, impulsive Mary soon became popular in the social life of the new capital city. Her admirers were the most notable American statesmen of the time, among whom Stephen A. Douglas was prominent. But the tall, gaunt Lincoln, the unconventional assemblyman, witty and forceful in debate, of "Presidential Timber," won the heart of this buxom southern lass.

The "scheduled wedding" was abruptly derailed on the "fatal first of January," 1841.¹ Lincoln's lack of social polish, and obscure lineage doubtless bore heavily upon him as he pondered the qualities of Mary Todd who was of a noteworthy Kentucky family. The contemplation of this "inequality" evidently engendered within him an emotional conflict which overpowered the man who had been master

¹ Paul M. Angle, historian, stated: "Records . . . show that no license was issued to Lincoln on or before January 1, 1841 . . ."

—L. O. R.

of many trying situations. Fortunately, a visit with his faithful old friend, Joshua F. Speed, in Louisville, Kentucky, was to the dispirited Lincoln "a balm in Gilead." He had told Mr. Speed he was "in two minds and a quandary"; that he was "being pulled in opposite directions by two equally important impulses." Mr. Speed was not disappointed in the destitute young lawyer with whom he had shared his bed in Springfield.

About this time, in 1842, there appeared in the *Springfield Journal*, the "Rebecca Letters," a series of anonymous travesties in which General Shields was the target. Shields became irritated at these offenses and suspected Lincoln. Upon being accused, Lincoln acknowledged the authorship, and was forthwith challenged to give an account in a duel. It seems the scathing pen of Mary Todd was implicated although Lincoln, evidently, was the chief offender, and took the responsibility by accepting the challenge. He seemed ashamed of the affair, and said he wrote the burlesque for political effect and had no ill will towards Shields. Through the intervention of friends of both men a duel was averted "on the grounds."

Subsequently, Abraham Lincoln and Mary Todd were brought together again, and on November 4, 1842, in his thirty-third year (Mary was twenty-three) they were united "for better or worse." As Dr. William E. Barton expresses it: "These two people, who were so divinely created to irritate each other, were also constituted in such a fashion as to be necessary to each other's comfort and peace." To this union, four sons were born, of whom only Robert Todd, the eldest, lived to mature age. He was a distinguished American although overshadowed by his illustrious father. Robert Todd Lincoln was born in Springfield, Illinois, August 1, 1843. He was graduated at Harvard in 1864; was Captain in the Federal Army under

General Grant; at close of the Civil War he settled in Chicago, and practiced law until 1881 when he became Secretary of War in Garfield's Cabinet. He retained this position under Arthur's administration. He refused to oppose President Arthur in the convention when mentioned as a Presidential candidate. From 1889 to 1893, inclusive, he was Minister of the United States to Great Britain. He was counsel for, and later became president of, the Pullman Palace Car Company. He resigned this office in 1911 and became chairman of the board of directors. He died July 25, 1926, in Manchester, Vermont, at the age of eighty-three years, and, according to his wish he, with his son beside him, is interred in the Arlington National Cemetery—the body of his son Abraham (1873-1890) having been removed from the tomb at the Lincoln Monument. His daughters, Mary and Jessie, were married and left descendants. Robert Todd Lincoln was the last descendant of his renowned father bearing the family name; his mother and three young brothers lie entombed in Lincoln's Monument, in Oak Ridge Cemetery, Sangamon County, Illinois. The names and dates of the three other sons of the President are:—Edward Baker, March 10, 1846—February 1, 1850; William Wallace, December 21, 1850—February 20, 1862; and Thomas ("Tad"), April 4, 1853—July 15, 1871.

(In 1900 the United States Congress approved a Confederate section in Arlington where "Glory guards with solemn round the bivouac of the dead." Peacefully, now, they lie side by side, suggestive of the comradeship prevailing among their surviving brothers.)

5

In 1846 Lincoln was elected to the lower house of Congress. Following this two-year term he "practiced law more assiduously," and carried on until the duties of the Presidency called him to Washington. (He declined the governorship of the Oregon Territory in 1852, proffered by President Fillmore).

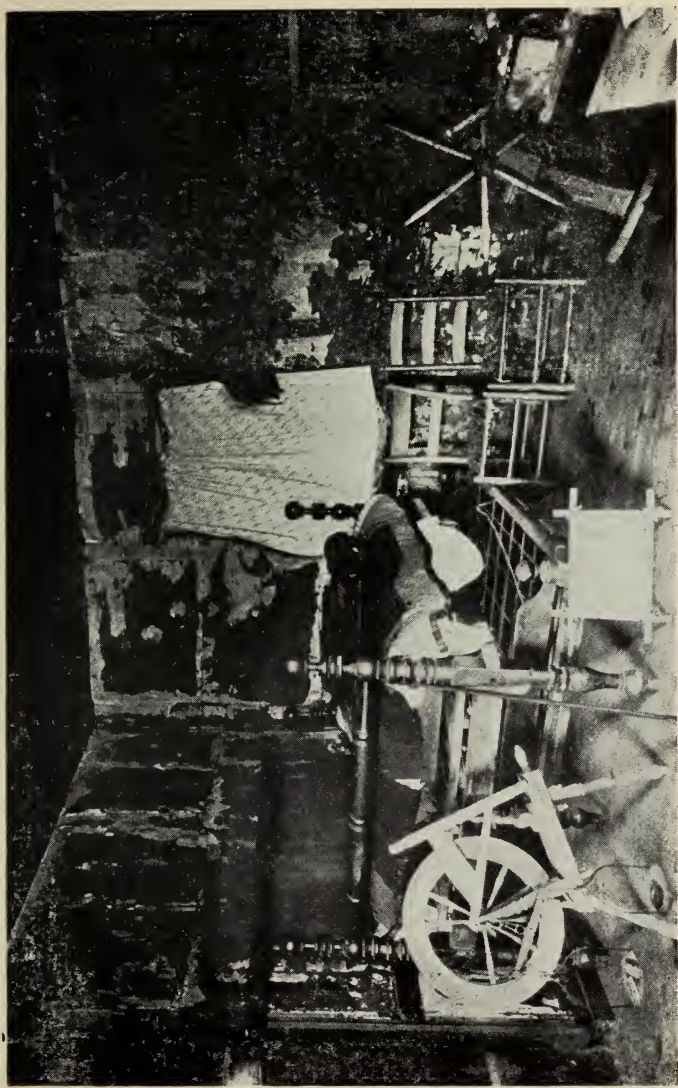
The extent of Abraham Lincoln's knowledge of jurisprudence cannot be computed, but his career as an attorney at law is a credit to his talent and rectitude. His candid, penetrating expression, terse, confuting anecdotes, frank admission of weak points, and sincere appeal to the jury and magistrate were chief factors in his success. Morse said: "Lincoln was pre-eminently the honest lawyer, the counsel fitted to serve the litigant who was justly entitled to win." Henry C. Whitney said: ". . . Mr. Lincoln's pre-eminent greatness lay in the combination of the powers of analysis and synthesis." He was a bulwark against dishonesty in practice, and was stabilizing in admonition. Among his notes was the following advice to aspiring students:

"Let no young man choosing the law for a calling for a moment yield to the popular belief (that lawyers are necessarily dishonest). Resolve to be honest at all events; and if, in your own judgment, you cannot be an honest lawyer, resolve to be honest without being a lawyer . . . Choose some other occupation rather than one in the choosing of which you do, in advance, consent to be a knave . . . Discourage litigation, persuade your neighbors to compromise whenever you can. Point out to them how the nominal winner is often the real loser—in fees, expenses and waste of time. As a peace-maker the lawyer has a superior opportunity of becoming a good

man. There will always be enough business. Never stir up litigation. A worse man can scarcely be found than one who does this. Who can be more nearly a fiend than he who habitually overhauls the register of deeds in search of defects in titles, whereupon to stir up strife and put money in his pocket? A moral tone ought to be infused into the profession which should drive such men out of it . . . Stand with anybody that stands right, and part with him when he goes wrong . . . Be sure you put your feet in the right place and then stand firm.

Shortly before a morning court session closed in which Lincoln was defending a client, he discovered some facts which convinced him that he could not conscientiously attest the validity of the case. When court resumed, Lincoln was absent. The judge sent a messenger to inquire the reason he did not appear. Lincoln sent back the following message: "Tell the court that I discovered my hands were dirty and I am going home to wash them."

The country attorney was an early circuit rider in Central Illinois where fields and streams are glorified by bordering woodlands, and where cattle in bluegrass meadows add charm to the landscape. Some of the old stage-coach road grade depressions in Sangamon and Menard Counties over which Lincoln traveled are still plainly visible. There is one of these grade depressions athwart the roadside near my great-grandfather VanNattan's old place, abutting Uncle "Ben" Bancroft's farmstead, nine miles northwest of Springfield. There is one running at an oblique angle through the sloping pasture land on the Will Trainor place a mile northwest of Chinquapin bridge. This land was formerly the William Henry Herndon farm. Herndon's old house, with addition, is now the home of Mr. Trainor and his wife who have owned the place for years. Will and his brother, George, inherited the farm from their father, who purchased it from Mrs. William H. Herndon. Mr. Trainor is the son of the late Leonard Trainor who was the foster son of William Henry Herndon of the Lincoln-



Courtesy of June Power Reilly

"Lincoln Inn," whipsawed walnut lined house, built in 1830 — George Power homestead, Cantrall, Illinois. Note poster bed in which "Lincoln slept" while attending Judge Power's court.

Herndon law firm. The old well on the place still gives forth its sparkling water as it is drawn up "dripping with coolness."

Word has been passed on to the writer, and to other descendants of the settlers who lived along the old itinerary circuit, that Lincoln frequently stopped at the farmsteads to drink from the old oaken bucket, and to water his horse at the log trough near by. He was affable, but most of his remarks along the wayside of that period have been lost in the oblivion of the past, for in those days he was only "honest Abe, the circuit lawyer," or "Lincoln, the Assemblyman."

Not far from Grandfather VanNattan's old farm, on the George Power homestead, some ten miles northwest of Springfield, Illinois, there stands a Lincoln shrine, an old two-room building not generally known. Mrs. F. C. Reilly, granddaughter of Justice Power, and her husband own the cabin, known as the "Power Court House" or "Lincoln Inn" because Lincoln argued his "first" law case there before Justice Power, and slept several nights in Power's house while attending Court. Housed in this obscure building are relics possessed by the Power ancestry for some two hundred years—saddle bags brought from Kentucky in 1819, spinning wheels, and so forth. The most valued possession enshrined in the old home is the "poster" bed in which Lincoln slept.

Lincoln was brought into mutual relationship with able, progressive men of the legal profession among whom were Douglas, Browning, Trumbull, Edwards, and Logan. Doubtless, the influence of these masters of the science of law was highly beneficial to Lincoln whose knowledge was gleaned largely through the practical study of men.

Abraham Lincoln became the junior law partner with Major John T. Stuart in Springfield, Illinois, April 12,

1837, and continued in this capacity until May 14, 1841, when he and former First Circuit Judge Stephen T. Logan established partnership, and carried on till September 20, 1843, or somewhat later in practice, and at this time Lincoln became the senior law partner with William Henry Hern-don. This partnership continued formally until Lincoln's death. Bronze tablets mark the sites of these law ventures, all of which are in close range of the present Sangamon County Court House where Lincoln officially attended Legislative session, where he delivered his famous "House Divided" speech, and where he finally lay in state before interment at Oak Ridge.

6

Abraham Lincoln was not an unfamiliar sight to my forebears of the vicinity of Springfield. They generally called him, plainly, "Lincoln." Some had passed and exchanged greetings with him while he was riding in stage-coach or buggy, or on horseback over the earth roads, and while walking on the board walks of the day. My aunt Clarissa Tufts VanNattan's family lived on Jackson Street near the Lincoln household. They said there was an impressive solemnity about his bearing, although on passing he always smiled and gave a friendly greeting. Sometimes on a cold day his shawled or caped figure was seen about the place. He took care of his horse, and neighbors said he had a cow and did the milking for some time. A small barn used to stand at the Jackson Street alley on the Lincoln place. The original house is owned and kept in repair by the State of Illinois. It is on the northeast corner of Eighth and Jackson Streets where the Lincolns lived from 1844 to 1861. He carried groceries home from town, and frequently carried or led one of his boys. Aunt Clara said she had seen Lincoln come out of his home, and play marbles with the boys, when she was a girl "along in the early fifties." He loved children, and was friendly to all he met. The personal experience that impressed her most happened one day when she and her sister Marian were running home from school; Lincoln was ahead of them walking on the boardwalk. Just as they started around him Marian stubbed her toe on a loose board, and as she was falling Lincoln caught her and raised her in his arms

saying, as he placed her on her feet, "Now run home and tell your mother you were in Abraham's bosom," while he laid a great hand on each of their heads.

Uncle Thomas Peter Renne told of being directed by Lincoln. Uncle Tom, "along in the fifties," was hauling a load of wood from Grandfather's timber to an address in Springfield; not being sure of the exact location, he stopped his team at a street crossing, and inquired the way of a tall man who was the future President. Lincoln came out to the road, and, in courteous manner, explained minutely how to find the place, which was in his neighborhood. Doubtless many personal observations could have been passed on to us had the people of his time been mindful of their value to future Americans.

Mrs. Lizzie Strode Campbell, R. F. D. No. 1, Cantrall, Illinois, writes of her grandparents, John and Mary Strode, and of their pleasant acquaintance with Lincoln the circuit lawyer. The Strode farmstead, ten miles northwest of Springfield, was situated on the Petersburg-Springfield road. The stagecoach carried mail and passengers over that route, and stopped at the Strode home to rest and water the horses. On these occasions, when Lincoln was a passenger, he ate dinner and visited with Mr. Strode and his family. There were eleven children, eight of whom were born on that place. The land for the schoolhouse and cemetery bearing his name, in the district, was given by Mr. Strode who settled on his farm there in 1820, where he lived the rest of his life.

The story, typical of many unfounded, was handed down to us, that while walking through the timberland, in central Illinois, Lincoln noticed a hunter, through the trees, aiming his double-barrel shotgun directly at him. "Halloo there!" Lincoln called out. "What are you going to do?" "Stand your ground!" cried the huntsman, "the folks in my settle-

ment told me that if I ever found a man uglier than I am, to shoot him on the spot!" "Well," said Lincoln after a better look at the stranger's face, "fire away; for if I am uglier than you are, I don't want to live any longer!"

Another story comes down to us from the New Salem days: During the Congressional campaign in 1846, when both Peter Cartwright and Abraham Lincoln were candidates, Cartwright was holding evangelistic meetings in a schoolhouse. One evening when Lincoln was in the audience, Cartwright requested all to rise who expected to go to heaven. All stood up except Lincoln. Then Cartwright asked all who expected to go to hell to "stand up." Lincoln still remained seated. Cartwright was not satisfied with Lincoln's lack of response, and called loudly from the pulpit: "I asked all who expect to go to heaven to rise to their feet! Then I asked all who expect to go to hell to stand up! Now may I inquire, where does Mr. Lincoln expect to go?" Eyes were turned toward Lincoln who rose and said he did not intend to take part in the service, but since Mr. Cartwright insisted he would answer: "I expect to go to Congress."

(My grandparents and great-grandparents attended the Cartwright stirring revivals. They said, "He was a power for good.")

Grandfather VanNattan and others of the family frequently saw Lincoln while riding over the old roadways in Menard and Sangamon Counties south of Athens. The lanky "peasant prince," bronzed by the sun, the wind and dust of the wayside, would chat with the folks while watering his horse at the trough by the barnyard fence. He would sometimes adjust the saddle girth and pat the neck of his faithful steed.

The mounted rawboned circuit lawyer is passing along the old earth roadway, and the mud splashes from the

rhythmical beat of hoofs. He stops his horse, dismounts, and releases a pig trapped in a pasture fence; he turns cattle right-about in a lane to accommodate a farmer. He looks skyward to observe the time. He plods onward; it is early summer, and over the rail fence on either side of the road the dark-green corn is rustling in the breeze.

The countryside teems with activity through the long, warm summer days. The harvest moon appears. Pioneer farmsteads, many with log buildings near streams, and areas of hardwood timber, dot the landscape. Level fields of tall corn extend to the horizon. Farmers are cradling the ripened wheat and oats, and the new-mown timothy lies fragrant in the meadows. The cheery bobwhite calls from the stake of a rail fence flanked by ironweed and black-eyed susans. Livestock graze by the roadside, and from the rolling woodland pastures, clinking cowbells can be heard. The poultry are scattered by a team of horses entering the barnyard with a load of hay, topped by two jubilant reapers. A young woman, singing a hymn, wearing a calico dress and sunbonnet, is going toward the log house from the garden. She has stringbeans and tomatoes in a basket, and an armful of roasting ears. At a rude table under a walnut tree, near the ash-hopper, a buxom lass of twelve is plucking the feathers from a plump "dominiquer." A barefoot boy in homespun is drawing water at the windlass, curbed well, and by the woodpile at the edge of the orchard a motherly woman, singing buoyantly, is stirring peach butter in a great kettle.

Worthy, unassuming people, those early settlers. They found pleasure in comradeship, while meeting their homely responsibilities close to the good earth. They tilled their land, tended their livestock, spun, wove, mended, quilted, and accomplished with volition their daily tasks. Husking bees and the general harvest were largely community affairs

wherein neighboring farmers traded work. Their integrating lives of good will and cooperation created a wholesome environment, and contributed much to the common good of the people at large. They had their neighborhood gatherings and religious "meetings" in their homes and in the district schoolhouses. A circuit preacher periodically officiated. The school term was generally a six-months period.

Yonder goes a familiar figure, the tall horseman, his saddlebags flapping in unison with his stirrured feet and the drum of fleeting hoofs. It is late summer, and a cloud of dust follows in his wake. He becomes less and less discernible in the material haze till, finally, he disappears in the distance. Honest Abe, the country lawyer, will travel the judicial circuit no more. The people have called him to a greater responsibility.

The spirit of honesty and kindness personified in the life of Lincoln, the symbol of brotherhood, will ever be an ennobling influence wherever the story of his life is known. A consciousness of his unobtrusive wisdom and unsophisticated personality is keenly felt in the countryside where he worked—striving onward from New Salem to Springfield. Reminiscent of the tall, lean man with serious, lined face, are the murmuring waters of the Sangamon and the old trail over which he traveled in buggy, stagecoach, and on horseback many times.

THE SANGAMON

Fair valley of the Sangamon I see,
Old home of mine—
The fields aglow in pleasant memory,
Each friend and lane and tree is dear to me
A gift divine.

The morning sunrays o'er the meadows gleam,
And give me joy;
Oh, wood sublime, and pastureland and stream!
How oft I close my weary eyes and dream,
A carefree boy.

Yon plowman in a field, I see him plod;
His life is free,
A link between the sun and fertile clod,
His honest toil a prayer to mortal's God
Thus it should be.

The golden grain, the corn, the grazing kine,
A vision fair;
No language can portray, no word of mine—
No pen I hold make clear the scene benign,
A haven rare.

Beneficent, the winding stream flows by,
Imparting life;
Its placid pools reflect the earth and sky,
Its contours lend their grace to beautify;
Here is no strife.

Enchantment of the winter's ice and snow,
Each spotless drift
Fair sculptured by the north winds as they blow,
And skating there we felt a wholesome glow,
Dame Nature's gift.

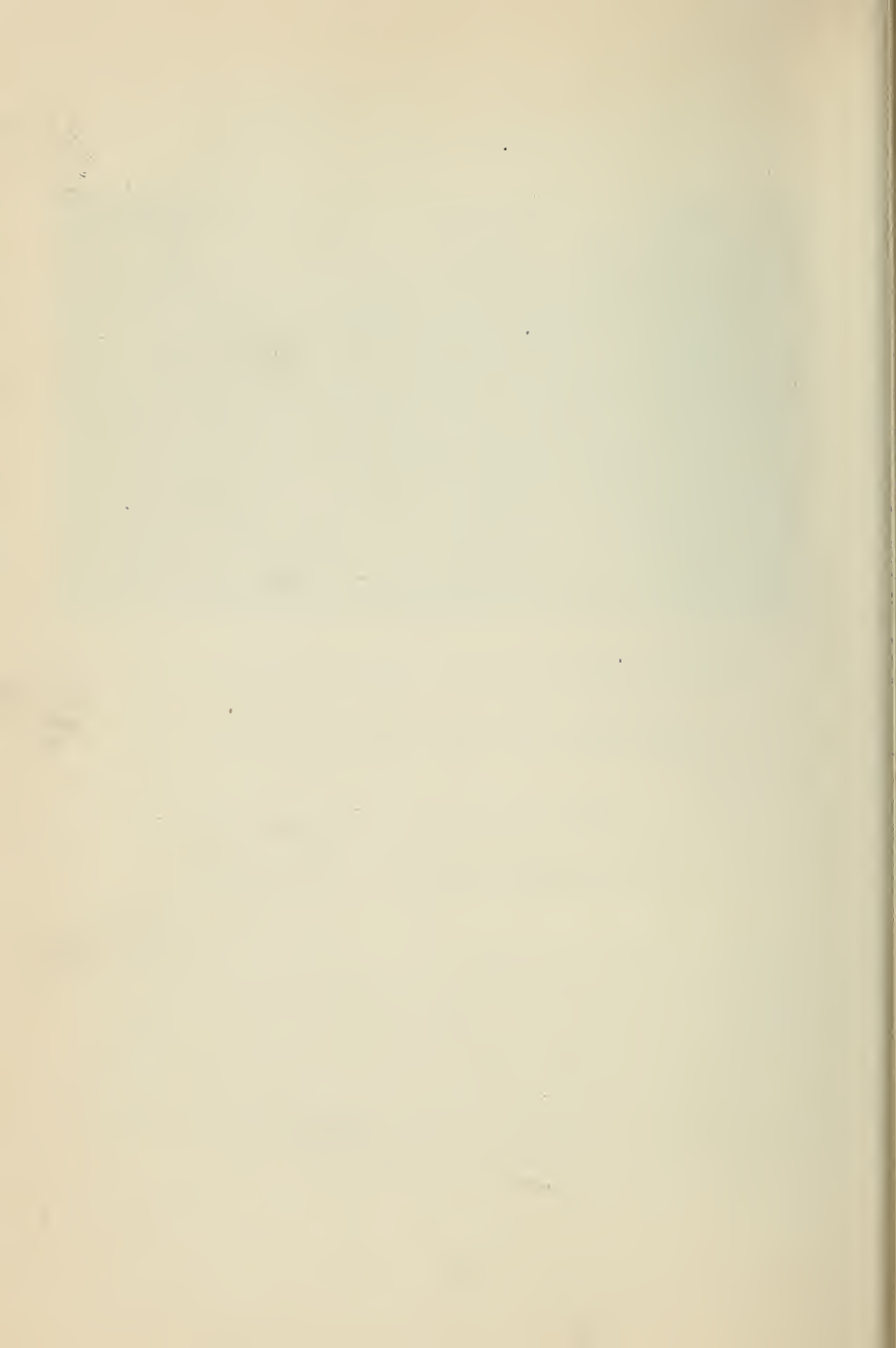
The wind, the drenching rain, the frost, the sleet,
Contribute, all,
To make the festive harvest time complete—
To make the flowers bloom—the birds entreat,
From Spring till Fall.

My heart is calm, I bow in silent prayer,
In thankfulness,
To gracious God for blessings here and there—
The Sangamon and all the earth so fair,
His name we bless.

While meditating I rove again through the haunts of my carefree, boyhood days; mirthfully rambling over the commons north of Springfield. The Sangamon River has always been of inestimable value to the community; this stream has supplied the city with water since 1868 when many of the old wells were abandoned. Driftwood along its low banks has long been a source of fuel to near-by



SANGAMON RIVER FROM IRVING'S BRIDGE NEAR NEW SALEM



residents, and, despite the mosquitoes, picnics and fishing are enjoyed under its overhanging trees. And, too, from personal memory I can say that swimming was a pleasure in the favored nooks of its swirling waters, though treacherous eddies and deep holes with submerged snags have taken the lives of several bathers, among whom was David S. Griffiths who was drowned while Mayor of Springfield in 1907. Sometimes corn in the lowland fields was destroyed by the early summer floodwaters, but in favorable seasons the crops were heavy in the rich bottom land. Horseshoe Lake, northward from the water works, was a safer place for swimmers, and there were Elliott's Lake, the swimming pool at Reisch's dam, the muddy-banked Spring creek, etc. Carpenter's park north of Springfield, bordering the river, is an enchanting dense wildwood and a memorial to William Carpenter, a pioneer of 1820, who built a mill partly of local stone there on the river bank. Along the wooded Sangamon and creek bottom lands berries and game were found in season while in the upland timber there were bountiful crops of various wild nuts, crab apples, redhaws, and the like. We roving youngsters knew where to find them.

The Lincoln Monument, being built the year I was born, 1873, was first dedicated in 1874. It has been taken down and rebuilt twice (1901 and 1931) since it was first erected. The exterior is essentially the same as the original design though the interior presents greater refinement. There are no exhibits now, only statuary depicting Lincoln, "The Ranger", "Circuit Rider", etc. The former winding staircase to the top of spire was eliminated during the reconstruction in 1931. Mr. Herbert Wells Fay, the custodian, has a large personal collection of Lincoln pictures and relics which visitors are welcome to see.

During summer vacation, some fifty-five years ago, we

schoolboys of the neighborhood herded cows on the commons in close range to the Monument. The Rutledge horsecar line used to cross a high trestle near the Tomb some five hundred feet north of Miller's pond at the end of Franklin Avenue. The old ice pond on the southeast corner of Oak Ridge and Franklin Avenues, where in frigid weather crews of men cut ice for storage, and where as gleeful skaters we glided, has, gradually through the years, been filled in. The old brick icehouse, too, is but a memory, where in late summer we romped in the deep sawdust. McCarty's brickyard, just south of the old icehouse, has passed with many of the old landmarks which were under the shadow of the Monument. The horsecar terminus of former days, at the trestle near the Monument and Tomb, has been annexed to Oak Ridge. To the west of the Monument, Lauterback's brickyard, Steiger's slaughterhouse and areas of timber and pasture land have given way to the expansion of Oak Ridge Cemetery, the Elysian City of the Dead. Wooded areas across the road east of Oak Ridge have been combined to form Lincoln Park, with its lagoon, winding red shale drives, stone pavilion and bridge, and natural groves. The old byways where Lincoln's great character developed call to mind the man who was a brother to the oppressed—a servant of "the American people."

The unanimity in the law firm of Lincoln and Herndon is remarkable in view of their dissimilar habits. Evidently Lincoln was a teetotaler, while Herndon was a toper. He admitted in writing that he went on "*one spree*"! I well remember comments in the old neighborhood in Fancy Creek Township northwest of Chiquapin bridge, e. g., "There goes Bill Herndon, the old drunkard, he lights his cigars with greenbacks." "Herndon the infidel." Some of these remarks were scathingly serious—some jocular. Although Mr. Herndon was unorthodox, there is evidence attesting his belief in an abstract, impersonal Creator. He expressed his philosophy briefly, thus:

My first love is God, then man, then nature. Come let us leap up into the uncolumbed air and rest upon the spongy foundations, and there let us see satellite, planet, and sun; sea, air, and land. What do we see? Coexistence and successions, powers and forces, and consciously God—no laws; but all, all governed by constant modes of operation, God, the immediate cause. This is my philosophy. Am I wrong?

Doubtless, Herndon was an able lawyer in his time and a popular man in the growing capital city as he was Mayor of Springfield in 1854.¹

Mr. Herndon acknowledged that the decline in his legal practice, after Lincoln's departure to the White House, was due to intemperance. He was conscious of its deteriorating

¹ At this time my grandfather, James Sullivan Renne, was assessor for Springfield.—L. O. R.

effect but, like many addicts, he did not have the stability in self-discipline to overcome the acquired thirst.

Confirmatory is the following intimate, colloquial letter, written to me January 11, 1940, by my uncle, J. J. VanNattan, seventy-eight, Colorado Springs, youngest and only surviving son of Squire Joseph VanNattan.

. . . Well Loue old billie Herndon as we called him got so he could hardly afford matches let alone green backs & cigars I have seen him hauled home from town just like you would haul a hog on hay in the back end of the wagon was there at the house when they unloaded him with his jug of whiskey—he would lay up stairs drunk for a week. He could tell any one how to plant seeds to produce the best results but he could not raise any thing but Hell. I was there one day when he was having his potatoes plowed and he was going along ahead of the team with a brush knocking the bugs off I asked him why he was doing that he said to kill them I told him they would all be back in the morning that he would have to catch and kill them by mashing them or with fire [some knocked them into a bucket containing coal oil] so he quit and said well let them have the spuds and even stopped the plow.

Yes he rode to town with father and I but not often he had a team of old army mules that would run away every chance they got but your Uncle Dan and I went down to help the boys haul in some hay (the neighbors helped each other in harvest) so Lee Herndon his son by his first wife told Dan to get on one side of the hay rack and Len Trainor on the other with their pitch forks and to prod the mules if they started to run and for me to open the gate so I did and when Lee spoke to them they sure lit out so the boys let them run till they wanted to stop Then was when the fun began the boys would prod the mules ran and kicked and they did that until the mules just stopped and let them prod . . .

One day they went to town and they got into a race going home the other team was getting ahead there was a new broom in the wagon and your Uncle Dan picked up the broom and japed a mule well he stopped so quick the three of them went clear over the dash board on top of the mules You will just have to excuse mistakes and the lead pencil for I am too nervous to write with a pen. I don't know as this will help you much . . . There are a few things that I see happen but they are not printable. Bell, "Billie" and Minnie were the children by his last wife. No Loue he would not allow meetings in his home—the meeting you allude to was at your Uncle Norm's house just north of Herndons. [The meeting at Herndons, to which I refer later, took place when Uncle Joe was at

Nickerson, Kansas, where he stayed about three years. It was there he met the girl, Lucy Madigan, who became his wife, and a good aunt to me.] Well old billie was a good kind neighbor Yes little Billie died first. They tried to keep his death from his father but some way he knew it and he told them billie is dead and he was soon gone . . .

Well solong and write soon.

Your Uncle Joe with lots of love.

It is unfortunate that some of the foregoing, *et seq.*, incidents should be recorded, and it is only that I believe they will serve a constructive purpose that I reproduce them here. This suggests the question: Would the analysis of anyone's life show a better record than that of Herndon? Personally, though never addicted to alcoholics or tobacco, I am sure my own would fall below his.

In 1871 William Henry Herndon established a diversified farm, of some 80 acres, (as I remember it) on the north rolling bank of the Sangamon River just a mile northwest of Chinguapin bridge where he resided with his family till his death, March 18, 1891, at the age of seventy-three years. The selection of this place for a home with its outlook over the river, the timberland and fields, indicates that he was a lover of nature. There is a lane through a natural wooded slope to the house which nestles among trees far back from the public road on the crown of a broad ridge.

Mr. Herndon was between sixty and seventy-three years old as I remember him most clearly. He was three years older than Grandfather VanNattan,¹ not so tall, and with grayer beard but no mustache. He was the father of eight children, five by his first wife: Anna, Mary, "Bev," Lee and "Nat." There were three by his second wife: Bell, "Young Bill," and Minnie.

¹ Mother's father, at this time, Justice of the Peace in Fancy Creek Township and member of the local board of school trustees.—L. O. R.

My cousin, Mrs. Minnie Brown, who lived a half mile from Herndons when she was a girl and till she was a young woman and married, wrote from Wheeling, Missouri, July 21, 1939:

"I have seen Mr. Herndon many times. They said he drank heavily. He never mixed with the neighbors very much, but he always seemed a perfect gentleman. He was taken sick and the boy was taken sick about the same time. The boy died and they tried to keep Mr. Herndon from finding it out. Something seemed to tell him—he said to some one in the room, "That has sure played hell with my business"—and they asked him what; he said, "Willie's dying." He took worse and died right away. They were both buried at the same time. Mr. Herndon was a great lover of flowers. He had a row of peonies clear across his garden . . . As I remember her (Mrs. Herndon) she was a refined educated lady. Her name was Annie Miles, . . . (his second wife).

September 30, 1939

Willie Herndon died the day before his father. (Departures separated by midnight.) I know because Mother and Father were there so much during their sickness and deaths. Papa helped the undertaker prepare their bodies for burial . . . (At the funeral the preacher said, "We will leave his record with his Maker.")

It is not difficult to understand how some accounts confuse the time of the deaths of Herndon and his son, in view of the circumstances: time, location, closeness of departure, the same names, etc. My uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Newlun (Mrs. Minnie Brown's parents), who were present during the bereavement, said that "Young Billie" died first.

"Edd" and Annie Herndon, grandchildren of William Henry Herndon—son and daughter of Lee, used to visit at the country home. Edd was quite a dandy, around twenty when I knew him. From Springfield, he came out to see his grandfather's family as I visited my grandparents. To me, around ten to fourteen, Edd's small, black, well-twisted mustache was the acme of man's acquirements, and my

great ambition was to grow a black, curled one just like Edd's. Some ten years later I raised a small mustache, but, alas, it was the color of bleached straw!

Minnie and Annie, though aunt and niece, were about the same age. Annie was comely and likeable, while Minnie was beautiful of form and features, and, best of all, personality. She had a smile for everybody. One summer evening when we were in our latter teens, and Minnie was visiting with Annie in Springfield, another fellow and I met them down town, and saw them home from the square. Of *course* I, the homely, walked with captivating Minnie. I *couldn't* restrain my hands and arms, and wanted to kiss her goodnight (where is the man who wouldn't, whether nineteen or ninety!), but she pulled away with a smile, and ran across the lawn with Annie to the house. As we were all close together I noticed that the other youth had the same disappointing experience with Annie. In those days I was more interested in Minnie's charms than in the Lincoln data which her father was "diligently" compiling.

I remember in 1885 attending religious service at the Herndon home. I went with Grandfather, Squire Joseph VanNattan, who lived a mile northwest of Herndons, and who was the leader. Mr. Herndon took no part in the "meeting" and did not stay in the room. It was Mrs. Herndon, as I recollect, who invited the neighbors for that evening. Her husband, "old Billie," generally opposed suggestions that prayer meetings be held in his house. (Because he had observed hypocrisy in some church members he censured all professed Christians.) There was no church for miles around and it was the custom to hold meetings in the Wiggins and Strode schoolhouses and, alternately, at the neighbors who were in sympathy with the religious movement. There was a good representation of the neighborhood at those services, and I recall that

evening at Herndon's, sitting close on quilt-covered planks which supplemented the chairs, that a mischievous youth called out to Bell Herndon, who was a robust young woman: "Sit closer, Bell!" Those meetings, with their sincere prayers and testimonies and heartfelt songs of praise, made a lasting spiritual influence on many of the attendants.

Most of the neighbors, old and young, came out to those religious meetings. Gallants escorted their ladies, and joined in the sacred songs. I visualize those devout leaders and congregations that met by turns in the neighboring homes, some sitting on chairs in rows and others on improvised benches. I remember attending meetings at the Wiggins and Strode schoolhouses and at several of the farm homes in Fancy Creek Township—the Bulah's, Herndon's, Jefferies', Snyder's, Squire VanNattan's, and Norman VanNattan's. Occasionally they met together in winter. I hear the sleigh bells, and see the cutters and bobsleds, drawn by trotting horses, moving along over the snow. The folks rein up at the front gate, alight, "tie up" at the hitching post and rails, blanket their teams, and file into the neighborly home. From the lighted room comes the glad refrain, "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love . . . " Sometimes in summer, on Sunday, they would meet outdoors at Grandfather's on the bluegrass beside the flower garden under the friendly trees. Rather salutary, this assembling for spiritual and social well-being. Some, from a distance, rode horseback or in buggies or in other horse-drawn vehicles; some walked—"the young folks" arm-in-arm, from adjacent farmsteads. The devoted leaders, in those union services, denounced *sin* in every form; there was no compromise, even with minor evils. Here was exemplary "youth guidance," wholesome training in Christian ethics, in moral principles, a challenge to the laxity of modern "Y's," formal churches, and to Depart-

ments of Social Science in our present-day institutions of higher learning.

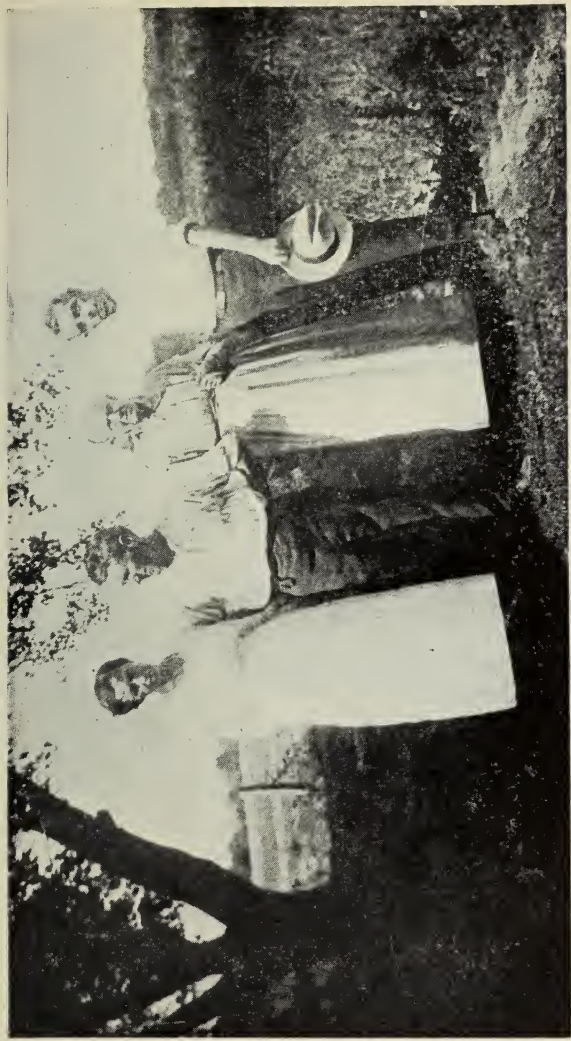
The entrance to the Herndon farm was adjacent to my Uncle Norman VanNattan's home from which the Chinquapin bridge could be seen, and hoofs and iron-rimmed wheels could be heard rumbling over the plank floor of the wooden bridge which spanned the famous Sangamon. The river, except the western bend, was hidden by a dense growth of trees and brush which skirted the stream. Gone forever are many of the quaint reminders of the old days. The covered bridge has been replaced by one of steel which is not graced by the long, wooden sign: DRIVING THROUGH THIS BRIDGE FASTER THAN A WALK STRICTLY PROHIBITED, though the spring hard by, that refreshed wayfarers, still flows.

Although Herndon's home was about six miles north of Springfield he did not depend on any horse to make the trip. He would sometimes walk the entire distance to get his mail. This was many years before Rural-Free-Delivery was established. The walk to town was not unusual in those days. Aunt "Sally" Swallow, my grandmother Van Nattan's elder sister, when past seventy, sometimes walked the seven miles from the home place to Springfield. Of course, if a farmer, driving along the road, overtook a foot-traveler, he was sure to rein up and call out, "Climb in!"

Mr. Herndon kept rather aloof from his neighbors and from the activities of the religious and temperance group in Fancy Creek Township in which Squire VanNattan was prominent. Notwithstanding, he was on speaking terms with Grandfather and with all others he casually met. Some attributed his aloofness to a false sense of superiority because he had been associated with Lincoln as a lawyer. Some in the vicinity thought he avoided them because he was ashamed of his spells of inebriety, while others looked down on "old Bill Herndon, the drunkard," as a degenerate.

8

Vivid is the old neighborhood in random reverie. Again I ride from town with Grandfather who overtakes and invites Mr. Herndon to share the spring seat; he stops his team at the top of the Chinquapin grade, and locks a hind wheel of the wagon to ease the horses down the steep road. He releases the chain at the foot of the hill, and we clatter across the old covered bridge and along the Sangamon bottom levee. From the interlacing trees near the river a wood thrush is pouring forth his melody. The Day farm, with its big white house and vineyard on the upland, is to the right, and to the left of the bend the Herndon home is up over the hill. I look back after passing the big gate, where the neighbor alighted, and see a pathetic, ay, a tragic figure, trudging with unsteady step up the lane under the overhanging trees, holding fast to his mail. Two crows wing low over John Strode's berry patch, fly higher over the road, and caw as they light in the top of an oak in the Herndon pasture. I hear the loud neigh of Uncle Norm's stallion from the stable near by. Grandfather seems depressed as he slaps his roans with the lines. "That infernal alcohol," he ejaculates. The stallion screams again, and I hear him prance as we pass the barn. We greet Uncle Mose, an ex-slave, and his daughter, Mosella, walking along the road. (The neighbors like these good-natured colored people who work on the Day farm.) Uncle Norm waves from the door of his grist mill hard by; we wave back and move on. Pleasant Aunt Martha Newlun and two of her lovely girls come out from their house, and through the



Photograph by Lucy Renne Story

Left to right: Cousin Mary VanNattan Gregory; David Gregory, her husband; Aunt Clara Tufts VanNattan, Mary's mother, of the Lincoln-sidewalk episode; Louis Obed Renne. Taken in the summer of 1921 on the Squire Joseph VanNattan farmstead on the Lincoln Trail, Fancy Creek Township, Sangamon County, Illinois. (Eighty-year-old bellflower apple-tree at left.)

dooryard gate by a mulberry tree, near the turn of the road, and get their groceries and mail from the wagon. (It was a mutual courtesy among the neighbors to take or send eggs, butter, etc., to town to be traded for provisions.) The springs squeak, and the wheels and trotting horses stir the dust as we drive on past the Wiggins schoolhouse where we turn west to Grandfather's place, second from the corner on the north side of the road. I see the big log house, embowered in trees, and the peach orchard at the rear. The late afternoon sun casts a mellow glow over the meadows. A goldfinch flits from a mullen plant into an elm beside the road while deep in Snyder's cornfield a plowman is spiritedly singing, "And now unto others—I'm telling, how he s-a-v-e-d a poor sin-n-e-r like me!" At family prayer, after supper that evening, in the calm of nightfall, Squire Van-Nattan prayed for his neighbors, for the world and for the outlawry of the debauching liquor traffic.

[A half century ago timber covered the "40" across the road west of the Wiggins schoolhouse. I remember the time my younger brother, Charles, and I were blackberrying there. We each held a tin pail in one hand and a big stick in the other. Two neighbor women, walking past, took a short-cut across the corner of the unfenced woodland, and noticed that we were apprehensively gripping our clubs, whereupon one of them quizzed, "Are you boys looking for snakes or berries!"]

Herndon's lack of restraint in the use of intoxicants, while aware of the virulent effect, was tragic, and is an indictment against the liquor traffic. Evidently he was honest in his dealings, and inflicted injury upon no one but himself and his family who suffered misfortune because of his drinking. Unfortunately the world can never be certain that all his writings are expressions of sober reflection, enslaved as he was to alcoholic drink. Some of his

statements regarding Lincoln have been contradicted by subsequent researchers and his contemporaries; nevertheless, his *Life of Lincoln* embodies valuable data for discriminating students of the Emancipator, though it is clear that his opinion should not be considered inerrant throughout.

The following excerpts are from letters by William H. Herndon:

To Mr. Hart, Springfield, February 24, 1869 (referring to his "memoranda etc."): "Give me your opinion . . . as to the value . . . what a man ought to pay for them or the use of them. Fame and money are the rewards of him who writes a standard biography of President Lincoln."

To "Friend Lamon," February 25, 1870. "If you discover any—errors . . . in my lectures which you wish to quote correct them . . . a lawyer can't scarcely snatch time to eat, as you know well. The wonder is that I could get time to think about anything except—*whisky*."

A postscript to his letter written to "Friend Arnold," November 20, 1866, is an avowal that his appraisal of the martyred President was largely based upon the "opinions of others," and it indicates that his association with Lincoln as a junior law partner was not intimate.

Since I began to gather *facts* nearly two years, I have undergone various shades of opinion and belief, and after two years' reflection on the facts, beliefs, and opinions of others, you now have my own opinion of the man and the spirit of my book.¹

Are all of Herndon's writings true, and his compilation authentic? Did he fabricate and "collect" capriciously for "fame and money" as some imply? Will such vagary, including the obscene and the noble, stand analyzing? Would

¹ (It was my privilege, in the Huntington Library, to read this postscript and other autographed letters of William H. Herndon relating to Abraham Lincoln.—L. O. R.)

he sacrifice Lincoln's reputation and question his parentage on fantastic, vague hypotheses? These questions, and others, may never be answered satisfactorily except to thoroughgoing students of Lincoln. It is for the individual to form his own conclusions after weighing well the legends and history of this modest singular colossus who made an indelible mark in this temporal realm.

How fortunate it would be for humanity if all the world's literature had its source in noble purpose.

Herndon seemed to admire Lincoln. In 1886 he said, "I have tried in all that I have said to be truthful and impartial—the more that he is known, the better the world will like him." He had his picture, in oval frame, hanging in the law office. The picture is Meserve 85, taken from a steel plate¹ made by Buttre of a photograph by Brady, February 9, 1864. When Mr. Herndon retired from law practice, and moved to his country home north of Springfield, he took the picture and hung it in his library. When he died my Aunt Clarissa VanNattan, who lived on the adjoining place,² tried to befriend the widow, and at that time Mrs. Herndon gave her this picture of Lincoln. After my aunt passed away her daughter, Mary, gave the picture to me. As I write these lines this picture is hanging on the wall in my room. The marred, faded, oval frame denotes its age. While on a visit to the old home in the winter of 1934, Cousin Mary Gregory took the picture from an old trunk, and handed it to me saying, "Lou, I know you will appreciate this picture." I took it to Lincoln's Monument, and Mr. Herbert Wells Fay, the Custodian, classified it for me, and said Robert Todd Lincoln told him it was his mother's preferred picture of the President.

¹ There are many copies from this plate in the world today.

² It is remarkable that Aunt Clara lived near the Lincoln home when she was a girl and near the Herndon home when she was a married woman.—L. O. R.

William Henry Herndon lies buried amid the oaks on the ridge across the glen north of Lincoln's Tomb. His epitaph, selected from his own composition, is humanely eloquent:

WILLIAM H. HERNDON—17 YEARS LINCOLN'S LAW PARTNER
DEC. 25, 1818 — MAR. 18, 1891

THE STRUGGLES OF THIS AGE AND SUCCEEDING AGES
FOR GOD AND MAN — RELIGION — HUMANITY AND *LIBERTY*
WITH ALL THEIR COMPLEX AND GRAND RELATIONS — MAY
THEY TRIUMPH AND CONQUER FOREVER, IS MY ARDENT
WISH AND MOST FERVENT SOUL - PRAYER. FEB. 23, 1858
WM. H. HERNDON

9

In Colonial days the blackamoors were widely disseminated as private property North and South. The practice of slavery gradually lost popularity in the North, and through legislation finally became illegal in all the northern States.

At the outbreak of the Civil War the population of the United States of America was one-eighth slave, "localized" in the South. Slavery, again, through Southern promoters, became a growing enterprise; its steady expansion had for years engendered apprehension in the minds of the opponents of the institution. New bills, new amendments proposed to the Constitution, were designed to clear the way for new fields in the slave trade—the Wilmot Proviso Amendment, 1846, the Fugitive Slave Law, 1850, the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, 1854, the Lecompton Constitution, 1857, and other measures did not mitigate but heightened the strained relation of that "house divided against itself." The Dred Scott Case was prolonged from 1846 till 1857 when the United States Supreme Court rendered, what seems to me, a decision in conformity with the law. However, the denial of Scott's freedom aroused resentment in the North, and widened the breach between the contending parties. There were disquieting concurrent phrases: "Party of Freedom," "States' Rights," "Constitutional Rights," "Territorial Legislation," "Supreme Court Decisions," "Proslavery Party," "Unfriendly Legislation," "Police Regulations," "Popular Sovereignty," "Squatters' Rights," "Old Line Whigs," "Know Nothings," "Free

Soilers," "City of Brotherly Love," "Underground Railroad," etc.

Among all the agitation and legislation, the most humiliating act for the anti-slavery faction was the Fugitive Slave Law whereby the free States were required to retrieve runaway slaves who had escaped within their borders. The mass of the people of the American Commonwealth, from wayside hamlet to the National Capitol, were fervidly active in the controversy of the day. Slavery was the major political issue. Eminent statesmen were awake with enthusiasm in that paramount contention. Potent editorials and oral disputes in high places accelerated antagonism.

At this time Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas came together in the public arena. In 1858 Lincoln challenged Douglas to joint public discussion, the results of which obscure their former debates (Springfield, 1839, and Peoria, 1854). The acceptance of this challenge marked the beginning of Douglas' political defeat. What is of vastly greater significance, it marked the beginning of Lincoln's rise to national and universal fame. (Time and place of these debates: Ottawa, La Salle County, August 21, 1858; Freeport, Stephenson County, August 27, 1858; Jonesboro, Union County, September 15, 1858; Charleston, Coles County, September 18, 1858; Galesburg, Knox County, October 7, 1858; Quincy, Adams County, October 13, 1858; Alton, Madison County, October 15, 1858).

Judge Douglas, the "little Giant," an advocate of peace, was apparently the most influential member of the United States Senate. He was chairman of the Committee on Territories, was forceful and aggressive, and champion of democratic legislation; particularly does he stand out in his vehement and commendable denunciation of the fraudulent Lecompton "Constitution." But his mental combat with

the penetrating mind of Lincoln, in those famous debates, does not redound to his credit.

Douglas, an impetuous Democrat, aspired to reach greater heights in national fame but his condemnation of the Lecompton Constitution was offensive to the Southern Democratic politicians, while the "unfriendly legislation" suggested in his "Freeport Doctrine" was the climax which forthwith turned their support to Breckinridge, and motivated the opposition of Buchanan and his partisans. This party division naturally contributed to Lincoln's final success. The South, by a predominant vote, urged that Kansas be admitted as a slave State under the provision of the Lecompton Convention.

The repugnant act which placed Douglas under lasting condemnation was his sponsorship of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill. In effect this Bill nullified the Missouri Compromise, (the part relating to the extension of the slave trade), and opened the way for the spread of slavery north of lat. 36° 30'. Among the scatheful rebukes he received for this measure were the sobriquet, Esau, and thirty pieces of silver awarded in contempt by a woman's society in Ohio. He was burned in effigy in some of the "free States."

The culmination of the Lincoln-Douglas debates of 1858 found its expression at Freeport and Jonesboro. At the second joint debate which took place at Freeport, Lincoln put the question to Douglas: "Can the people of a United States Territory in any lawful way, against the wish of any citizen of the United States, exclude slavery from its limits prior to the formation of a State Constitution?" Lincoln's friends had advised against propounding this question, saying, "If you do you can never be Senator." "Gentlemen," Lincoln replied, ". . . if Douglas answers he can never be President." It seems Lincoln expected Douglas' reply because of his statements in a previous speech at

Springfield, e. g. “ . . . to have Negroes or not to have them . . . to have just such institutions as they choose, each State being left free to decide for itself.” And in his Bloomington speech, July 16, 1858, “The principle of the Nebraska Bill . . . of leaving each State and Territory free to decide its institutions for itself . . . I pledged the vindication of that principle.” Doubtless Lincoln’s purpose in this case was to have Douglas clarify the ambiguity (so held by many) in his proposed ordinance and reaffirm his position definitely during this popular debate that it might become widely known. In the North the clauses in question (“ . . . not to legislate slavery into any Territory or State, nor to exclude it therefrom . . . Provided that nothing herein contained shall be construed to revive or put in force any law or regulation . . . prior to the act of March 1820 either protecting, establishing, prohibiting or abolishing slavery.” “Principle of non-intervention.” “With or without slavery . . .”) were generally accepted as meaning that a Territory had the power to exclude slavery from its bounds (“Squatter Sovereignty”), while the interpretation in the South was that as the Constitution recognized property right in slaves the Federal Government was bound to protect such right in the Territories as well as in the States.

Lincoln’s question placed Douglas on the defensive, and the reply revealed more clearly the sophistry in the Kansas-Nebraska Bill.

Douglas replied:

Mr. Lincoln . . . heard me argue the Nebraska Bill on that principle . . . and he has no excuse for pretending to be in doubt as to my position on that question. It matters not what way the Supreme Court may hereafter decide as to the abstract question whether slavery may or may not go into a Territory under the Constitution, the people have the lawful means to introduce it or exclude it, as they please, for the reason that slavery cannot exist a day or an hour anywhere unless it is supported by police regulations. These

police regulations can only be established by local legislature, and if the people are opposed to slavery they will select representatives to that body who will by unfriendly legislation effectually prevent the introduction of it into their midst. If, on the contrary they are for it, their legislation will favor its extension. Hence, no matter what the decision of the Supreme Court may be on that abstract question, still the right of the people to make a slave Territory or a free Territory is perfect and complete under the Nebraska Bill.

This reply of Douglas made him secure with the Illinois democrats who were in favor of "Squatter's Rights," hence his re-election by a Senatorial majority, but it caused the party division which resulted in Lincoln's ultimate election to the Presidency.

During the next debate, at Jonesboro, Lincoln revealed the invalidity of Douglas' reply by declaring that slavery had extended into Territories without "police regulations" since Colonial days; that it was the function of the United States Courts to protect and enforce property rights, including slavery, under the Constitution; that Territorial legislators are under oath to support the Constitution of the United States, and, that, if lacking, Congress was obligated to enact legislative support of any constitutional right; furthermore, that Congressional legislation and Territorial measures adverse to the Constitution of the United States were invalid.

Lincoln's reply:

The second interrogatory that I propounded to him, was this:

Question 2—Can the people of a United States Territory, in any lawful way, exclude slavery from its limits prior to the formation of a State Constitution?

To this Judge Douglas answered that they can lawfully exclude slavery from the Territory prior to the formation of a Constitution. He goes on to tell us how it can be done. As I understand him, he holds that it can be done by the Territorial Legislature refusing to make any enactment for the protection of slavery in the Territory, and especially by adopting unfriendly legislation to it. For the sake of clearness I state it again; that they can exclude slavery from the Territory, 1st, by withholding what he assumes to be an indispensable

assistance to it in the way of legislation; and 2nd, by unfriendly legislation. If I rightly understand him, I wish to ask your attention for a while to his proposition.

In the first place, the Supreme Court of the United States has decided that any Congressional prohibition of slavery in the Territory is unconstitutional—that they have reached this proposition as a conclusion from their former proposition, that the Constitution of the United States expressly recognized property in slaves, and from that other constitutional provision that no person shall be deprived of property without due process of law. Hence they reach the conclusion that as the Constitution of the United States expressly recognized property in slaves, and prohibits any person from being deprived of property without due process of law, to pass an act of Congress by which a man who owned a slave on one side of a line would be deprived of him if he took him on the other side, is depriving him of that property without due process of law. That I understand to be the decision of the Supreme Court. I understand also that Judge Douglas adheres most firmly to that decision; and the difficulty is, how is it possible for any power to exclude slavery from the Territories unless in violation of that decision, that is the difficulty . . .

I hold that the proposition that slavery cannot enter a new country without police regulation is historically false. It is not true at all. I hold that the history of this country shows that the institution of slavery was originally planted upon this continent *without* these "police regulations" which the Judge now thinks necessary for the actual establishment of it. Not only so, but is there not another fact—how came this Dred Scott decision to be made? It was made upon the case of a Negro being taken and actually held in slavery in Minnesota Territory, claiming his freedom because the act of Congress prohibited his being so held there. *Will the Judge pretend that Scott was not held there without police regulations?* There is at least one matter of record as to his having been held in slavery in the Territory, not without police regulations, but in the teeth of Congressional legislation supposed to be valid at that time. This shows that there is vigor enough in slavery to plant itself in a new country even against unfriendly legislation. It takes not only law but the enforcement of law to keep it out. That is the history of this country upon the subject.

I wish to ask you one other question. It being understood that the Constitution of the United States guarantees property in slaves in the Territories, if there is any infringement of the right of that property, would not the United States Courts, organized for the government of Territories, apply such remedy as might be necessary in that case? It is a maxim held by the courts, that there is no

wrong without its remedy; and the courts have a remedy for whatever is acknowledged and treated as a wrong.

Again I will ask you, my friends, if you were elected members of the Legislature, what would be the first thing you would have to do before entering upon your duties? *Swear to support the Constitution of the United States.* Suppose you believe, as Judge Douglas does, that the Constitution of the United States guarantees to your neighbor the right to hold slaves in that Territory—that they are his property—how can you clear your oaths unless you give him such legislation as is necessary to enable him to enjoy that property? What do you understand by supporting the Constitution of a State? Is it not to give such Constitutional help to the rights established by that Constitution as may be practically needed? Can you if you swear to support the Constitution, and believe that the Constitution established a right, clear your oath, without giving it support? Do you support the Constitution if—knowing or believing there is a right established under it which needs specific legislation, you withhold that legislation? Do you not violate and disregard your oath? I can conceive of nothing plainer in the world. There can be nothing in the words “support the Constitution,” if you may run counter to it by refusing support to any right established under the Constitution. And what I say here will hold with still more force against the Judge’s doctrine of “unfriendly legislation.” How could you, having sworn to support the Constitution, and believing it guaranteed the right to hold slaves in the Territories, assist in legislation *intended to defeat that right?* That would be violating your own view of the Constitution. Not only so, but if you were to do so, how long would it take the courts to hold your votes unconstitutional and void? Not a moment.

Lastly I would ask—is not Congress itself under obligation to give legislative support to any right that is established under the United States Constitution? A member of Congress swears to support the Constitution of the United States, and if he sees a right established by the Constitution which needs specific legislative protection, can he clear his oath without giving that protection? Let me ask you why many of us who are opposed to slavery upon principle, give our acquiescence to a Fugitive Slave Law? Why we hold ourselves under obligation to pass such a law, and abide by it when it is passed? Because the Constitution makes provision that the owners of slaves shall have the right to reclaim them. It gives the right to reclaim slaves, and that is, as Judge Douglas says, a barren right unless there is legislation that will enforce it.

The mere declaration, “No person held to service or labor in one State under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall in consequence of any law or regulation therein be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered upon claim of the party to

whom such service or labor may be due," is powerless without specific legislation to enforce it. Now, on what ground would a member of Congress who is opposed to slavery in the abstract, vote for a Fugitive Law, as I would deem it my duty to do? Because there is a Constitutional right which needs legislation to enforce it. And although it is distasteful to me, I have sworn to support the Constitution and having so sworn, I cannot conceive that I do support it if I withhold from that right any necessary legislation to make it practical. And if that is true in regard to a Fugitive Slave Law, is the right to have fugitive slaves reclaimed any better fixed in the Constitution than the right to hold slaves in the Territories? For this decision is a just exposition of the Constitution, as Judge Douglas thinks. Is the one right any better than the other? Is there any man who, while a member of Congress, would give support to the one any more than the other? If I wished to refuse to give legislative support to slave property in the Territories, if a member of Congress, I could not do it holding the view that the Constitution established that right. If I did it at all, it would be because I deny that this decision properly construes the Constitution. But if I acknowledge, with Judge Douglas, that this decision properly construes the Constitution, I cannot conceive that I would be less than a perjured man if I should refuse in Congress to give such protection to that property as in its nature is needed.

Is slavery wrong? That is the real issue. That is the issue that shall continue in this country when these poor tongues of Judge Douglas and myself shall be silent. It is the eternal struggle between two principles—right and wrong—throughout the world . . . the one is the common right of humanity and the other the divine right of kings.

Douglas was re-elected to the Senate, but Lincoln had a "hearing," and ultimately won the Presidency.

After the Senatorial election on November 2, 1858, and joint Legislative ballot, January 6, 1859, Lincoln commented: "I am glad I made the late race. It gave me a hearing on the great and enduring question of the age, which I could have had in no other way; and though I now sink out of view, and shall be forgotten, I believe I have made some marks which will tell for the cause of liberty long after I am gone." He was building for "the vast future."

After reading his "house divided against itself"¹ speech to a group of friends in advance of its public delivery he was advised to modify it for political advantage; he replied:

The time has come when these sentiments should be uttered, and if it is decreed that I should go down because of this speech, let me go down, linked to the truth—die in the advocacy of what is right and just. If I had to draw a pen across my record, and erase my whole life from remembrance, and I had one choice allowed me what I might save from the wreck, I would choose that speech, and leave it to the world just as it is . . . I am not bound to win, but I am bound to be true; I am not bound to succeed, but I am bound to live up to what light I have . . .

The Presidential campaign of 1860 has been recorded by able historians. Douglas spoke frequently in various cities but Lincoln remained in the neighborhood of Springfield, though, Herndon said, "Lincoln was adroit and untiring in pursuit of his ambition." Lincoln commented: "The issue is really between Senator Douglas and me. The people heard and read our speeches in the debates two years ago and are fully informed as to my views."

After Lincoln's nomination at the Republican National Convention in Chicago, May 18, 1860, apprehension and excitement prevailed over the southern section of the Union. To the committee referring to his nomination he said, ". . . Deeply and even painfully sensible of the great responsibility which I could wish had fallen upon someone of the more eminent men and experienced statesmen whose distinguished names were before the convention . . ."

¹ Salient points—"There can be no distinction in the definition of liberty as between one section and another, one class and another, one race and another. 'A house divided against itself cannot stand.' I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free; I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided."—June 16, 1858.

Following is his letter of acceptance:

Springfield, Illinois, June 3, 1860

Sir: I accept the nomination tendered me by the Convention over which you presided, of which I am formally appraised in a letter of yourself and others, acting as a Committee of the Convention for the purpose. The declaration of principles which accompanies your letter meets my approval and it shall be my care not to violate it or disregard it in any part. Imploring the assistance of Divine Providence, and with due regard to the views and feelings of all who were represented in the Convention, to the rights of all the States and Territories and people of the nation, to the inviolability of the Constitution, and the perpetual union, prosperity, and harmony of all, I am most happy to cooperate for the practical success of the principles declared by the Convention.

A. LINCOLN

Hon. George Ashmun.

Foreboding rumors of impending war accentuated the ill-feeling that, unfortunately, had arisen between the radical elements of the North and South. With a deep consciousness of the situation the valor of Douglas responded. Supporting his former opponent, he remarked to his Republican associates of the Senate, "Gentlemen, you have nominated a very able and a very honest man." His speech at the "Wigwam" is powerful in its support of Lincoln's policy. He cried, "If war must come, . . . it is the duty of every American citizen to rally around the flag of his country!" His career was fast drawing to a close. He answered the last call on the third of June after the Presidential inauguration, and today his epitaph expresses the spirit of the Little Giant whose political career was a battle for "Popular Sovereignty," excluding all of "inferior race." His dying words to his children are inscribed on his memorials: TELL THEM TO OBEY THE LAWS AND SUPPORT THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES. Lincoln had the White House draped in mourning to his memory.

IO

The crossroads of a great, modern republic loomed ominous and challenging. Would the nation be divided? Could wisdom calm the gathering storm?

South Carolina had seceded; the threatening clouds of hostility swept over the nation. The "Cotton States" were fearful of their rights, although Lincoln had "no inclination to interfere with the institution of slavery" where it was constitutionally established. His discerning mind; his great, paternal heart, strove for conciliation. His farewell address at Springfield, February 11, 1861—8 A. M.—from the rear platform of the train at the Great Western Station, reveals his perception of the crisis:

My friends: No one, not in my situation, can appreciate my feeling of sadness at this parting. To this place, and the kindness of these people, I owe everything. Here I have lived a quarter of a century, and have passed from a young to an old man. Here my children have been born, and one is buried. I now leave, not knowing when or whether ever I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of the Divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail. Trusting in Him, Who can go with me, and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well. To His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell.

Enroute to Washington, D. C., at Cleveland, he said:

What they do who seek to destroy the Union is altogether artificial. What is happening to hurt them? Have they not all their rights now as they ever have had? Do they not have their fugitive slaves returned now as ever? Have they not the same

Constitution that they have lived under for seventy-odd years? Have they not a position as citizens of this common country, and have we power to change that position? What then is the matter with them? Why all these complaints? As I said before, this crisis is altogether artificial . . . Suppose you go to war, you cannot fight always; and when, after much loss on both sides, and no gain on either, you cease fighting, the identical old questions . . . are again upon you.

The South was distrustful of the incoming administration, and felt insecure. Other slave-holding States cast their lot with South Carolina which had seceded December 2, 1860. They were: Mississippi, January 9; Florida, January 10; Alabama, January 11; Georgia, January 19; Louisiana, January 26; Texas, February 1; Virginia, April 17; Arkansas, May 6; North Carolina, May 20; and, Tennessee, June 8; all the latter ten in 1861. The forty western counties of Virginia supported the Union. The "Border States," Missouri, Maryland and Kentucky, were divided also in sentiment regarding secession, and were represented in both the Federal and Confederate Governments and armies. Besides attacking Fort Sumter, the leaders of the secession scheme took possession of the United States Custom House, Postoffice, and Arsenal in Charleston. The harbor forts, Pickens and Moultrie, were also besieged. Though Lincoln decided to "send bread to Anderson," he laid the question before his Cabinet: "Assuming it to be possible to now provision Fort Sumter, under all circumstances, is it wise to attempt it?"

Unofficially, the war began with the firing on the steamer, *Star of the West*, January 9, 1861; officially, April 12, 1861 "by the Confederate bombardment of Fort Sumter." Strange to say, in view of the broad expanse of the country—some three thousand by two thousand miles—Richmond, the Confederate Capital, was put one hundred miles from the Federal Capital, Washington, D. C. Strange also, that both Lincoln and Davis were born in Kentucky.

Lincoln's efforts to avert war failed. He would not yield the seized Federal property; he would not recognize the Confederacy, nor listen to caustic accusations against his opponents. He said, "I am slow to listen to criminations among friends, and never expose their quarrels on either side. My sincere wish is that both sides will allow bygones to be bygones, and look to the present and future only." On December 11, the President advised Elijah Kellogg, member of the Committee of Thirty-three: "Entertain no proposition for a compromise in regard to the extension of slavery . . . The tug has to come, and better now than later."

There were hysteric war instigators in the North: General John A. Dix cried, "If any man attempts to haul down the American flag, shoot him on the spot!" There were also concessionists: Horace Greeley advised: "Let the erring sisters depart in peace." Phillips declared: "Let the South march off, with flags and trumpets . . . give her forts, arsenals, and sub-treasuries . . . all hail disunion."

There were sectional demonstrations in the South encouraging the Confederacy; there were impetuous cries, "The irrepressible conflict is about to be visited upon us through the . . . black Republican, Lincoln, and his fantastical, diabolical Republican party."

Jefferson Davis of Mississippi resigned his Senatorship with the avowed purpose of supporting the secession movement. Other Southern statesmen, twenty-one Senators, followed and the forces were marshalled for a death grapple.

There were prayers that "the mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chords of union when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature . . ."

"Fondly do we hope, reverently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away . . ."
"Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity and a firm reliance on Him who has never yet forsaken this favored land are still competent to adjust in the best way all our present difficulty . . . " "This is essentially a people's contest. On the side of the Union it is a struggle for maintaining in the world that form and substance of government whose leading object is to elevate the conditions of men . . . " "Whatever shall appear to be God's will, I will do." There were conferences of the most serious nature during those four-odd momentous years. There were official visits to encampments, and long vigils by the tall, somber executive.

We are coming, Father Abraham,
Six hundred thousand more,
From Mississippi's winding stream
And from New England's shore.
We leave our plows and workshops,
Our wives and children dear,
With hearts too full for utterance,
With but a silent tear.
We will not look behind us,
But steadfastly before.
We are coming, Father Abraham,
Six hundred thousand more!"¹

¹ Lines from heading of Grandfather's letter to his family, written November 24, 1862, while encamped south of Nashville, in which he expects to be home by the first of April and asks for prayers that ". . . we may be faithful to God and our country . . ."—L. O. R.

II

The dissension between the Federalists and Anti-Federalists that harassed the country for nearly a century was brought to a termination under the leadership of Lincoln. This discord, resulting from the conflicting interpretation of the Constitution as it applied to the governmental rights of the States, was intensified by the increasingly adverse attitude of the North toward slavery, and finally resolved into secession. Apparently, there is no specific recognition of State Sovereignty in the Articles of Confederation or in the Constitution of the United States, but the claim of the Anti-Federalists was never officially relinquished until the surrender of the Confederacy.

In his call for 75,000 volunteers to contest independent sovereignty of the State as expressed in secession, Abraham Lincoln denied the claim of the Disunionists. Profoundly significant was this challenge which was to test the foundation of that "house divided against itself." The responsibility for the turn of national affairs during the Lincoln administration obviously lies with the President, and with him rests the honor or the opprobrium resulting from that far-reaching decision of April 15, 1861.

Lincoln was a potent executive—a dominant force in national life, though, like all great men, his pronounced trait was modesty rather than presumption. There was a resolute continuity in his endeavor to establish, what he considered, justice. The contentions of committees and of his Cabinet did not influence him to deviate from his course. Compromise was foreign to him in relation to the great

problem involved. He said, "Let us be diverted by none of those sophistical contrivances such as we are so industriously plied and belaboured—contrivances such as groping for some middle ground between the right and the wrong." His conclusion, in a brief message to Seward concerning his mission at Hampton Roads Conference, was, "You will not assume to definitely consummate anything." He communicated to Grant, previous to Lee's surrender, ". . . You are not to decide, discuss, or confer upon any political question [with Lee]; such questions the President holds in his hands and will submit them to no military conferences or conventions." When Cameron advised arming the slaves against their masters, Lincoln declared, "This will never do! Secretary Cameron must take no such responsibility. This question belongs exclusively to me."¹ To his Cabinet, in the Blair-Halleck wrangle, he peremptorily declared, "I propose continuing to be myself the judge as to when a member of the Cabinet shall be dismissed."

Dictatorial! War supersedes representative government; it conscripts the peaceable, slaughters the innocent, destroys priceless achievements of civilization, and sows the seed of hatred and future strife. The President of a Republic automatically becomes commander-in-chief of the army and navy. Though a nominal director of all legally organized armed forces, he has extraordinary authority over the policy and resources of the country. Lincoln was known to have been an ardent advocate of government by the people, and though, in his exalted position, he arbitrarily maintained a definite stand on affairs of national consequence, he was not averse to salutary criticism. Relevant is the statement of the historian, James Ford Rhodes: "Men marvel at Alexander, Caesar, and Napoleon; their

¹ The Negroes were not unanimous on the war problem; while many donned the Federal uniform, some offered their services to the Confederacy.—L. O. R.

intimates and their subjects feared them. No one stood in awe of Lincoln . . . he received suggestions and counsel that any other powerful ruler would have spurned. Personal aggrandizement ruled the giants; . . . abnegation . . . him."

Lincoln's acts were in no way surreptitious. The frankness and generosity of his nature were prominent characteristics. He made his position clear. It was a well known fact that he was out of sympathy with the institution of slavery, albeit he respected the legal right of the old South to retain their slaves. This regard was clearly set forth in his Cooper Institute speech in New York, February 27, 1860.

Holding as they [Southern States] do that slavery is morally right and socially elevating, they cannot cease to demand a full national recognition of it, as a legal right and a social blessing. Nor can we justifiably withhold this on any ground, save the conviction that slavery is wrong . . . Their thinking it right and our thinking it wrong is the precise fact upon which depends the whole controversy. Wrong as we think slavery is, we can yet afford to let it alone where it is, because that much is due to the necessity arising from its actual presence in the Nation; but can we, while our votes will prevent it, allow it to spread into the National Territories, and overrun us here in the free States? If our sense of duty forbids this, then let us stand by our duty, fearlessly and effectively . . . Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith, let us, to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it.

As Congressman in January, 1849, he introduced a bill providing for the emancipation of slaves in the District of Columbia with compensation to the owners. This consideration for both slave and slaveholder is characteristic of Lincoln, and there were in his public and private life other expressions conformatory to the provisions of this Bill, e. g., "Fellow citizens of the Senate and House of Representatives, herein is a draft of a Bill to compensate any State which may abolish slavery within its limits, the passing of

which substantially as presented I respectfully and sincerely recommend, July 14, 1862.—Abraham Lincoln.”

The growing agitation in the North against slavery was constantly contributing to the factional barrier between the North and South, which was a natural result, owing to the diverse economic adaptability of these two major sections of the country. Moreover, the divergent philosophy of the people was a natural result, evolving from the industrial and educational development of their respective territories. Thus, the lack of coordination of interest alienated the unity of spirit which piloted our forefathers through the storms of a strange, new land.

Though Lincoln chose restraining measures, supported by an army of volunteers, in the crisis that developed subsequent to his election to the Presidency, the inception of the Civil War antedates the establishment of our republic. Slavery had been a canker in the heart of America since the early settlement of Virginia. An example of the widespread friction ascribable to slavery is found in *Settlements of Illinois* by A. C. Boggess, which registers: “From 1787 until years after 1830, the slavery question [in Illinois] was an unsettled one . . . The fear of the French that they might lose their slaves, and the desire to attract slaveholders to Illinois, led to determined and repeated efforts to legalize slavery.” Several petitions were sent to Congress praying for a repeal or alteration of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 which prohibits slavery in that region, but these were all denied as there was no evidence that the petitioners were representative of the people living in the territory involved. Consequently, the Ordinance was never repealed.

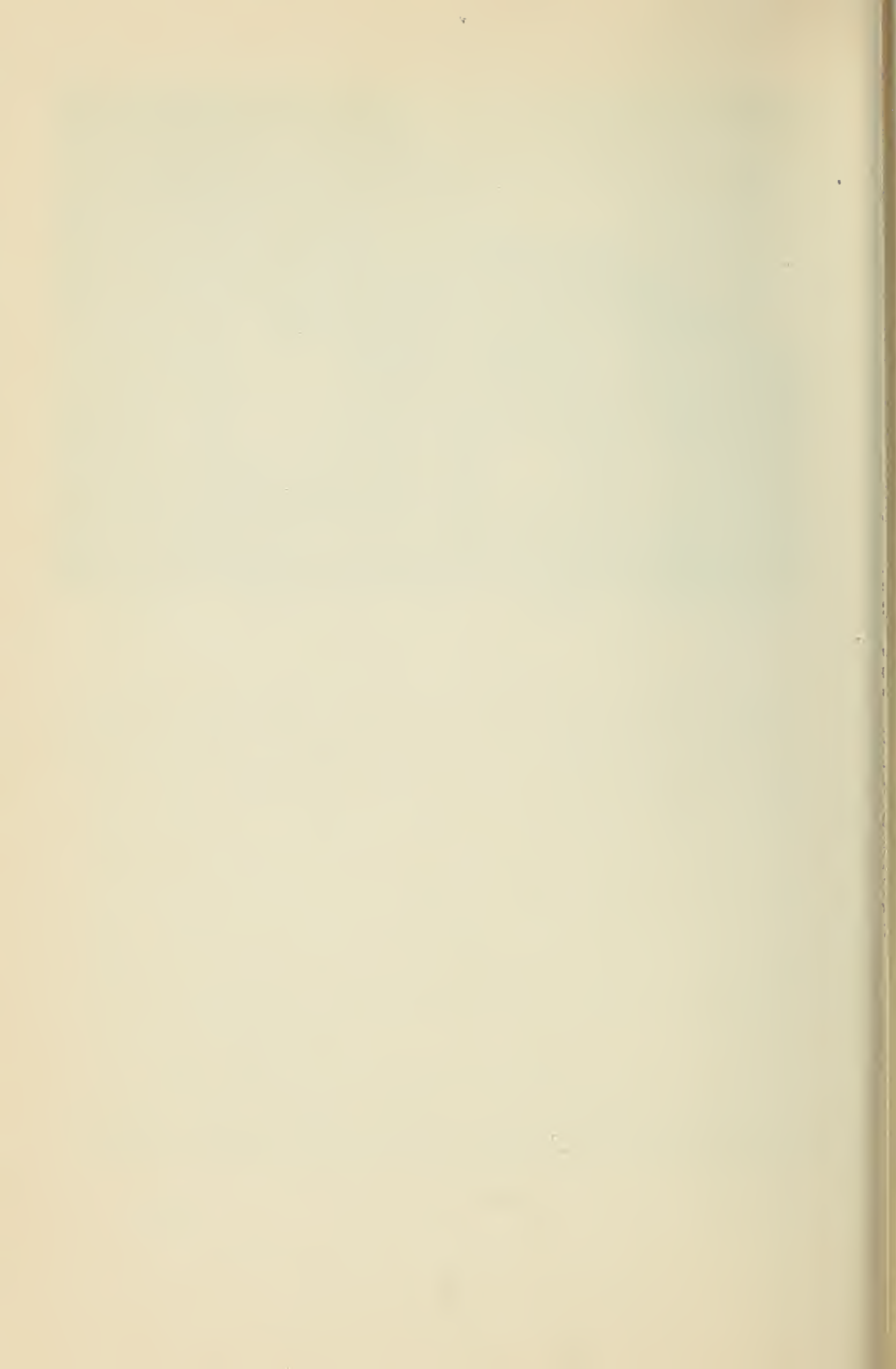
As our nation developed the agitation relative to slavery became more acute, the line of demarcation more pronounced, chiefly because of the dissimilar industrial pursuits



Photograph by the author (Winter 1935)

THE HERNDON HOME

Edge of addition visible at extreme right. Herndon died in low room in background, now used as woodshed and tool-house. Note rain-water barrel, and gourd wren-house on porch post. Home of Will Trainor.



the vast area of our Commonwealth presented. The trend was ever onward toward the tragic climax—there were the portentous milestones, a number of which stand out vividly along the historic highway: the importation of African slaves into the North American continent, 1620—the statutory recognition of slavery by Massachusetts, 1641—the opposition to slavery by the Society of Friends, 1688—Pennsylvania's act of 1712 to restrict the increase of slaves, annulled by the Crown—South Carolina's act of 1760 prohibiting the further importation of slaves, rejected by the Crown—Pennsylvania's lead in freeing her slaves, 1780—The Ordinance of 1787—The Missouri Compromise of 1820—the Turner slave insurrection, 1831—the division of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1844—The Wilmot Proviso amendment of 1846—the acquisition of Mexican Territory, 1848—The Fugitive Slave Law, 1850—the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, 1854—the seizure of the Federal Arsenal at Harper's Ferry by the fanatic John Brown, 1859—and finally, the act of secession led by South Carolina, December 20, 1860. The oncoming storm threatened the security of our Nation.

While slavery was generally considered a logical institution in the South, doubtless there were many like Lee who did not whole-heartedly subscribe to its justification, their decision at the outbreak of the Civil War being actuated by a sense of devotion to their native States. And in the North, opposition to slavery cannot be conceded as having been altogether humanitarian in character. There should be no harsh condemnation directed against the courageous veterans who took part in that great drama. Their concepts were formed, largely, by the general conditions under which they lived, and we believe that many of them, Blue and Gray, were loyal even to death for what they considered a just and worthy cause.

The courage of the brave men of the South was not

inspired through fear of the material loss of the slaves. The great general, Robert E. Lee, favored emancipation. In *Life and Letters of Robert E. Lee*, by the Reverend J. William Jones, D. D., page 127, we read, "that if the four millions of slaves in the South belonged to him [Lee] he would free them with a stroke of his pen to avert war." And, *On the Trail of Grant and Lee*, by E. T. Hill, page 71, "All his slaves he had long since freed." Menaced by the North in its growing opposition to slavery, which seemed basic in their industrial system, the Southern States felt that in order to maintain self-government their only recourse lay in the grave step of secession, the radical act which Wisconsin and other Northern States had previously threatened to employ when oppressed by Federal mandates. It was in defense of this "constitutional right" that the South unsheathed her sword.

Did the States have a constitutional right to secede and to hold slaves? As the Constitution was revised to meet the requirements for ratification by Georgia and South Carolina, the constitutionality of slavery was irrefutable, and there was the old question as to the right of a State to secede until the Civil War. Records indicate that the Constitutional Convention acknowledged the right of the States to conduct their domestic affairs, and that until Lincoln's administration in 1861 the Federal Tribunal as well as the Supreme Courts of the States supported the principle of State sovereignty, decreeing that the central government had no legal power other than that which was delegated thereto, and that Congress had no authority to enact laws except as empowered by the States through the Constitution. The foregoing is consistent with Article X, an amendment to the Constitution: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively or to the people."

Manifestly, the question is debatable whether, before the Civil War, secession was or was not a privilege to all the States except those purchased by the National Treasury, i. e., Florida and those between the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains—the Gulf of Mexico and Canada—the “Louisiana Purchase.” The indignant South felt that in denying the “right” to secede, Abraham Lincoln transcended the Constitution as did Washington and his compatriots transcend the colonial charters. Expediency alone delayed the fateful step of secession. Among our American leaders who affirmed States’ Rights, under the Constitution, are: Madison, Hamilton, John Quincy Adams, St. George Tucker, and Webster. The obdurate Greeley said, “The right to secede may be a revolutionary one, but it exists nevertheless.”¹ It seems Buchanan questioned Federal authority to act when South Carolina withdrew from the Union.

Was the South unduly alarmed by the election of Lincoln to the Presidency? Was Lincoln sincere in stating, “I have no purpose directly or indirectly to interfere with the institution of slavery in the United States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so and I have no inclination to do so.” He hoped to pacify the war sentiment, and put forth his best reasoning, as when in Congress he opposed the war against Mexico. Regarding the Mexican dispute Lincoln contended that the war was unnecessarily and unconstitutionally commenced by President Polk, and called for specific evidence to show the “spot” where Mexican troops had invaded United States soil. He endeavored to unite the States by conciliation under a permanent representative government in which citizenship

¹ *New York Tribune*, November 9, 1860.

with civil liberty would be a fundamental privilege to all who qualify irrespective of origin, faith or color.

His deeds and words reflect conciliation. Enroute to Washington, D. C., in his first speech on the trip, after leaving Springfield, at Indianapolis he said:

If the union of these States and the liberties of this people shall be lost, it is but little to any one man of fifty-two years of age, but a great deal to the thirty millions of people who inherit these United States, and their posterity, in all coming time. It is your business to rise up and preserve the Union and its liberty for yourselves, and not for me . . . I appeal to you again to constantly bear in mind that not with politicians, not with Presidents, not with office-seekers, but with you, is the question, Shall the Union and shall the liberties of this country be preserved to the latest generations?

I shall take care, as the Constitution itself expressly enjoins upon me that the laws of the Union be faithfully executed in all the States. Doing this I deem it to be a simple duty on my part; and I shall perform it, as far as practicable, unless my rightful masters, the American people, shall withhold the requisite means, or in some authoritative manner, direct the contrary. I trust this will not be regarded as a menace, but only as the declared purpose of the Union that it will constitutionally defend and maintain itself. In doing this there need be no bloodshed or violence and there shall be none, unless it is forced upon the national authority . . .

Enroute to Washington, D. C., at Pittsburgh, he said:

If the great American people only keep their temper on both sides of the line, the trouble will soon come to an end, and the question which now disturbs the country will be settled just as surely as all other difficulties of a like character which have originated in the government have been adjusted. Let the people on both sides keep their self-possession, and just as other clouds have cleared away in due time, so will this great Nation continue to prosper as heretofore.

Responding to a serenade in Washington, D. C., four days before the inauguration, Lincoln replied:

. . . Much of the ill feeling that has existed between you and the people of your surroundings and the people from among whom I came, had depended and now depends upon a misunderstanding.

I hope that if things shall go along as prosperously as I believe we all desire they may, I may have it in my power to remove something of this misunderstanding; that I may be able to convince you and the people of your section of the country that we regard you as in all things entitled to the same respect and same treatment that we claim to ourselves; that we are in no way disposed, if it were in our power, to oppress you, to deprive you of any of your rights under the Constitution of the United States of America or even narrowly to split hairs with you in regard to these rights, but are determined to give you, as far as lies in our hands, all your rights under the Constitution, not grudgingly, but fully and fairly. I hope that, by thus dealing with you, we will become better acquainted, and better friends.

Again in the closing words of his first inaugural address he appealed earnestly to the people:

... In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of Civil War. The government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the government, while I will have the most solemn one "to preserve, protect, and defend it."

I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection.

On May 19, 1862, he said:

... On the sixth of March last, by a special Message, I recommended to Congress the adoption of a joint resolution, ... as follows:—(Resolved, that the United States ought to cooperate with any State which may adopt a general abolishment of slavery, giving to such earnest expression to compensate for its inconveniences, public and private, produced by such change of system.)

The resolution in the language above quoted was adopted by large majorities in both branches of Congress, and now stands an authentic, definite, and solemn proposal of the nation to the States and people most immediately interested in the subject-matter ...

So much good has not been done by one effort in all past time as in the providence of God it is now your high privilege to do. May the vast future not have to lament that you have neglected it.

In a letter to Greeley, August 22, 1862, he wrote:

"... My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save or to destroy slavery ..."

Lincoln's record indicates that his policy would have worked no hardship in the South, had not the act of secession, seizure of Federal property, and the Fort Sumter incident (the latter called a ruse by some critics) occasioned an extreme procedure—devastating civil war and that drastic measure—the Emancipation Proclamation. Unfortunately, a rash, impetuous spirit swept over the country when Lincoln was elected President. South Carolina's lead in secession, and the Fort Sumter affair were not fostered by the farseeing men, who, inspired by the spirit of patriotism, eventually contributed without reserve to the prosecution of the Civil War through the Confederate ranks. This ominous upheaval thrust a tremendous problem upon the newly elected President. In the gathering gloom he said, "I know that the Lord is always on the side of the right. But it is my constant anxiety and prayer that I and this nation should be on the Lord's side."

In his second inaugural he indicated a belief that the war may have been a judgment of God: ". . . If God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondsman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn by the lash shall be paid by another drawn by the sword . . . 'The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.'"

In a message to a Quaker, Eliza Gurney, who, on behalf of the Friends, protested against the great sin of war, Lincoln wrote:

. . . Your people, the Friends, have had, and are having, a very great trial. On principle and faith, opposed to both war and oppression, they can only practically oppose oppression by war. In this hard dilemma, some have chosen one horn and some the other. For those appealing to me on conscientious grounds, I have done, and shall do, the best I could and can, in my own conscience, under my oath to the law . . . "

This reveals courteous response and consideration toward a people who deplore armed conflict.

Because of the required "oath" George Fox could not have become a high political official. Replying to a request for his support by the dominant military faction of his time, he said: "I live in the virtue of that life and power that taketh away the occasion for all war."

This alternative—an individual obligation—the Quaker saw as the omnipotent solvent for both war and oppression.

William Jennings Bryan counseled "Wait a year," when the impetuous wolves of destruction were snarling previous to America's entrance into the mad World War. Ah, had Lincoln waited a year! Compassionate Lincoln, with his inherent humanity, his forbearance, his sympathetic understanding. Although President Lincoln had taken "the most solemn (oath) 'to preserve, protect, and defend' the Union, should he not have been more patient with the suspicious South regardless of her defiance in occupying Federal establishments? Had Lincoln waited a year, or longer, perhaps the great spirit of the Southland would have recognized his integrity, his sincerity of purpose, and returned to the Union, and thus have averted a most heart-rending national tragedy! No mortal can say. The victory of the Federal forces doomed slavery as a legal institution in America but manifestations of the principle are evident today.

It seems Lincoln's situation was unique—his decision momentous, involving masterful interposition or viewing with resignation the dissolution of the Union. Apparently there was no feasible *via media*, and though the warning of Sophocles rang true and clear through the ages, "War does not of chance destroy bad men, but good, ever," a call to arms disturbed the comparative tranquillity of the countryside. The South retaliated; courageous men re-

sponded; they rallied from the hills and plains, some 2,300,000 valiant men of the North, laying upon the altar 300,000; and of the South, 1,000,000 strong, of which 100,000 were sacrificed.¹ The magnitude of this tragedy is beyond our comprehension. The dread spectre of death, disease and privation flung its scourge far and wide during that great struggle for the Nation's life.

¹ Apparently the most accurate casualty figures:

	Battle	Disease	Other
Union	110,070	224,586	24,872
C. S. A.	74,524	59,297	31,160

(*Dictionary of American History*, Volume V. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940. James Truslow Adams, Editor-in-Chief.)

I2

Truly, "the history of the vanquished is always written by the victor," and it is regrettable that Northern accounts are, in some instances, condemnatory toward the Confederate veterans. "Nowhere did he [Lincoln] charge the Confederates with cruelty."¹ "All things considered, the statistics show no reason why the North should reproach the South."²

The dauntless spirit of the Secessionists has never been surpassed by mortals of any time. Their sacrifice and devotion to a cause, which to them was vital and most valid, is astounding.³ Primarily, the valiant men and women of the old South fought for "justice" with tenacious perseverance, and while the North greatly exceeded in resources, the South with an army of less than one-half in numbers dealt a blow in casualties of some three to one upon their northern combatants. But the odds were too great, and the material culture of the Southland was destroyed; the stately old plantations were depleted, their substance consumed as incense for an ideal, the slave-holding, influential planter and his exclusive aristocracy faded away.

In 1926 I was in Dixie's Land for nearly a year, and enjoyed the generous hospitality of the Southerners which touched me very deeply. They are indeed a lovable, cordial

¹ *History of the United States*, Rhodes, Vol. IV, p. 504.

² *Ib.*, p. 508.

³ Regarding negotiations, the Civil War President wrote: "... I do not believe that any compromise embracing the maintainance of the Union is now possible..." (From Executive Mansion, Washington, August 26, 1863, to Hon. James C. Conkling).

people.¹ As I stood at the foot of Lee's monument in New Orleans, I thought of the resolute spirit of a man who fought gallantly for his beloved commonwealth, and of his sincerity in stating, "I have never seen the day when I did not pray for the people of the North." The North has always admired Lee. J. William Jones, in *Life and Letters of Robert E. Lee*, tells us that, through the suggestion of General Scott, Lincoln tendered the command of the Federal army to Lee, who replied, "Though opposed to secession, and deprecating war, I could take no part in an invasion of the Southern States."

In January, 1861, Lee wrote:

. . . As an American I take great pride in my country, her prosperity and her institutions, and would defend any State if her rights were invaded. But I can anticipate no greater calamity for the country than a dissolution of the Union. It would be an accumulation of all the evils we complain of, and I am willing to sacrifice everything but honor for its preservation. I hope, therefore, that all constitutional means will be exhausted before there is a resort to force. Secession is nothing but revolution. The framers of our constitution never exhausted so much labor, wisdom, and forbearance in its formation, and surrounded it with so many guards and securities if it were intended to be broken by every member of the Confederacy at will. It is intended for a perpetual Union, as expressed in the preamble . . .

Still, an union that can only be maintained by swords and bayonets, and in which strife and civil war are to take the place of brotherly love and kindness, has no charm for me. I shall mourn for my country and for the welfare and progress of mankind. If the Union is dissolved and the government disrupted, I shall return to my native State and share the miseries of my people, and, save in defense, will draw my sword no more.

Children of the North are taught to esteem the memory of that great American who was true to his conviction, though the path was fraught with hardship. His innate

¹ I noticed, hanging on the wall in the Library lobby of the University of Florida, the pictures of Davis, Jackson, Lee, and Lincoln.
—L. O. R.

dignity and refinement, enhanced by academic training, placed him on a high plane of society.

It was in a spirit of regard that I stood beside the statue ¹ of the Confederate soldier at Gainesville, Florida, in 1926. Thereupon, while strolling across the courthouse plaza of that university city, I noticed a gray-bearded man sitting on a bench. As I drew near him, he smiled and asked if I would sit down. Thanking him, I introduced myself, and sat beside him. His home, he said, was in Georgia, and he was spending the winter in Florida. In course of conversation, I asked him if he had experienced personal contact with the Civil War. "Sir," he replied, "I served for two years under the Confederate flag." "What is your opinion of that deplorable contest and its results?" I asked. "Well, sir," he answered, "it brought distress, though I believe Lincoln was right, as we are better off without slavery under a united government." This kindly veteran of the old South said other things which revealed a paternal heart, and which caused unshed tears to struggle within me. I thought of Father and this lovable man being adversaries in that bitter strife, as Father, twenty days under eighteen, was one of the volunteers (Co. G., 7th Illinois Inf.) to answer Lincoln's first call to arms, and subsequently to serve as scout cavalryman (Co. G., 10th Illinois, Cav.) throughout the War. What is the demon which turns peace-loving, fraternally spirited men into mortal combatants? The intervening years on the scroll of life rolled back, and there flashed before my vision the fratricidal conflict where neighbors and brothers fought antagonistically with conviction and a grim resolve to conquer. Vivid in meditation, was that tragedy where

¹ The inscription on the pedestal runs, THEY FOUGHT FOR US, AND FOR THEM SHOULD FALL THE TEARS OF A NATION'S GRIEF.—L. O. R.

homes were torn asunder by the ravaging war of fellow-countrymen.

The breach between the States was the tragic, inevitable result of the perverse attitude of the North and South appertaining to the institution of slavery. If unification of the States were to be effected a judicious mind must act; a constant hand must take the helm. The ineffectual policy of Buchanan in dealing with secession threw the responsibility upon the Lincoln administration. It seems there was a fair adjustment of fate in that arrangement since it was Lincoln's unsympathetic attitude toward slavery that prompted the South to withdraw from the Union.

The tall, sad President had a keen comprehension of the distressing and difficult task that confronted him. His fraternal appeal for amity and patience was ignored by the apprehensive disunionists and the northern militant politicians. Here was a supreme test for a great humanitarian. Could he have won the confidence of the Southerners by greater forbearance? Was slavery "in the course of ultimate extinction?" Could that vicious social order—the darkness of involuntary servitude—have been expelled by the light of justice through love and patience, enhanced by the sincere, indescribable appeal of the man?

13

"Not a star must fall."¹

Stark madness seized the people; law-abiding citizens from every field of industry hurried to the front during this turbulent period, and succumbed to the frenzy of slaying their kind. Desolation became widespread, especially south of Mason and Dixon's line during this violent upheaval when the resources of the seceded States were perilously on the wane. The blockade of her ports was, perhaps, the chief factor in bringing about the collapse of the South. Cotton piled along the seaboard became practically worthless while salt was at a premium in Richmond, despite the blockade runners. The outnumbered Confederates, through the indomitable courage that animated "Stonewall" Jackson, inflicted the greater casualties upon the Federal troops. This heroic general, during a bold reconnaissance at Chancellorsville in May, 1863, was evidently mistaken for an enemy at night, and shot from his charger by his own soldiers. Homesteads were plundered and demolished, North and South. Surely, no considerate American speaks with pride of "Sherman's march to the Sea." The devastation of that conquest demonstrated that "War is Hell."

J. F. Rhodes (historian) states, "More than once each side was seemingly on the brink of retaliatory executions

¹ "Not a star must fall"—lines from heading of Grandmother's letter to Grandfather and Uncle Norman who were in the army; written December 21, 1862. She writes: ". . . My sincere prayer to God is that you both may live to get home . . ."—L. O. R.

which would have been followed by stern reprisals. From such shedding of blood and its bitter memories we were spared by the caution and humanity of Abraham Lincoln, General Lee, and Jefferson Davis."

In the last year of the fateful war Lincoln wrote:

I see in the near future a crisis approaching that unnerves me and causes me to tremble for the safety of my country. As a result of the war, corporations have been enthroned and an era of corruption in high places will follow . . . I feel at this moment more anxiety for the safety of my country than ever before, even in the midst of war. God grant that my suspicions may prove groundless.

In the main, sincerity was the impelling force in the Civil War, though, doubtless, self-exaltation and greed were factors in many cases on both sides. However, it was a gentleman, who, on that memorable day, April 9, 1865, handed his saber to General Grant at Appomattox. After the surrender Lee appealed to the soldiers: "Go home and be good citizens . . . Unite in honest effort to . . . restore the blessings of peace." This sincere, patriotic advice, and Grant's gallant expression of sympathetic regard, "Let the boys take their horses and mules home; they'll need them for the spring plowing," constitute typical, stable qualities that place these great generals high in the esteem and affection of the American people. In solemn retrospection Grant said, "This war was a fearful lesson, and should teach us the necessity of avoiding wars in the future." (May our nation ever heed the wise counsel of Ulysses S. Grant: "Leave the matter of religion to the family altar, the church, and the private school, supported entirely by private contributions. Keep the Church and the State forever separate."—1875).

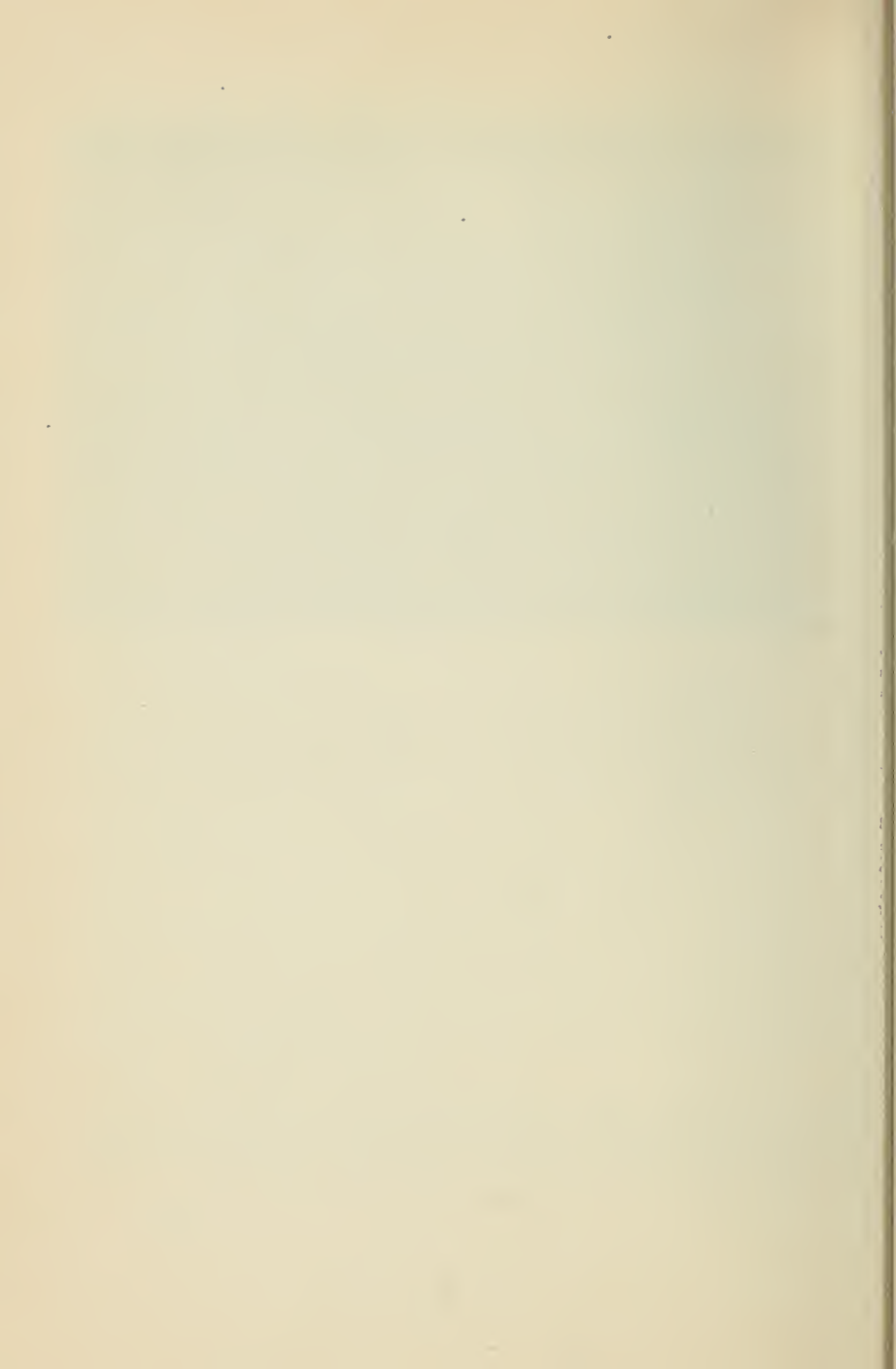
The names of those battlefields, where many of the American youth of their day sleep, will ever have their phantasmal echo: Big Bethel, Virginia; Shiloh; Pea Ridge;



Photograph by the author (1935)

THE POWER-REILLY FARMSTEAD NEAR CANTRALL, ILLINOIS

Lincoln "pleaded his first law case before Judge George Power" on this farm in the "Lincoln Inn," which stands to the left of this stately residence.



Richmond; Perryville; Manassas; Fredericksburg; Antietam; Vicksburg; Chattanooga; Missionary Ridge; Chancellorsville; Gettysburg¹; Wilderness; Spottsylvania; Cold Harbor; Five Forks; and others. And war on the sea resounds: the *Merrimac* and destructive rovers, *Sumter* and *Alabama*, the *Monitor*, *Cumberland*, and *Kearsarge*; and the waterways: Memphis, Hampton Roads, Mobile, New Orleans; the rivers *Cumberland*, *Mississippi*, *Potomac*, *Rappahannock*, *Tennessee*, *Stone*, *et alii*.

Besides the pre-eminent President there were statesmen and undaunted military leaders of the Civil War period who will ever be inseparable from American history and tradition: Seward, Sumner, Chase, Fessenden, Trumbull, Wade, Garrison, Clay, Frémont, Douglas, Blaine, Grant, Sherman, Sheridan, Buell, Rosecrans, Farragut, Meade, Thomas, Breckenridge, Davis, Stephens, Toombs, Lee, Jackson, Johnston, Semmes, the sanguinary privateer, and others. There was staid Lyman Beecher, "Man of God," and Peter Cartwright, legislator and eloquent evangelist, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness; prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." There was Whittier and his prophetic "Voices of Freedom."

When smitten as with fire from heaven,
The captive's chains shall sink in dust,
And to his fettered soul be given
The glorious freedom of the just.

There also was Harriet Beecher Stowe and her graphic, extreme, pen-picture of slavocracy in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

* * *

Silence prevails at Camp Butler, the old recruiting encampment just east of Springfield, where Father and many

¹ Note:—Uncle Norman VanNattan was shot in his left shoulder during this battle.—L. O. R.

of the local boys enlisted, and where Confederate prisoners were held; it is a Memorial Cemetery now. "These honored dead," as at Gettysburg, shall not respond to the bugler's reveille till Gabriel's Call. Their anxiety concerning battle lines and the folks at home is hushed. There are several bronze tablets throughout the grounds. The inscription on one of them reads:

NO RUMOR OF THE FOE'S ADVANCE
NOW SWEEPS UPON THE WIND;
NO TROUBLED THOUGHTS AT MIDNIGHT HAUNTS
OF LOVED ONES LEFT BEHIND.

Lincoln lived to see the insurgent States yield, and to see, through the calamitous travail, the dawn of the Nation's "New Birth of Freedom." His assassination was a cowardly, senseless act; an irreparable loss to the Republic. Many true Southerners mourned with the North; the jester's pen retracted, while unprincipled carpetbaggers and guerrilla depredations added chaos and peril to the war-torn country.

And when he fell in whirlwind, he went down
As when a lordly cedar, green with boughs,
Goes down with a great shout upon the hills:
And leaves a lonesome place against the sky.

—EDWIN MARKHAM.

Four years, two and three-fourths months from the day Lincoln delivered his affectionate farewell address at Springfield he was brought back in a casket. My mother, with relatives, was among the mourners who passed by his bier in the old State Capitol building. The serenity of his cold, lifeless features reflected his spirit of profound sympathy for the oppressed, his broad understanding and tolerance for his adversaries, and compassion for the assassin whose misdirected zeal caused his untimely death.

Mother never forgot Lincoln's beneficent countenance. It was a lasting inspiration to her.

What a strange concurrence of destiny is the fact that four years, to the day, from Lincoln's call for volunteers—April 15, 1861—his death, April 15, 1865, from the bullet of an assassin, startled the world.

14

Lincoln, in his characteristic straightforwardness, declared his limitations in judgment. He said: "I claim not to be more free from errors than others,—perhaps scarcely so much." In a speech in 1864, he stated, "I claim not to have controlled events but confess plainly that events have controlled me." And again, "I shall try to correct errors when shown to be errors, and shall adopt new views so fast as they shall appear to be true views." "I don't think much of a man not wiser today than he was yesterday."

He said regarding the phrase, "All men are created equal," which is incorporated in the Declaration of Independence:

I say no man is good enough to govern another man, without that man's consent. I say this is the leading principle—the sheet anchor of American republicanism. Our Declaration of Independence says: "We hold these truths to be self-evident; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; and among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

I think the authors of that notable instrument intended to include all men, but they did not intend to declare all men equal in all respects. They did not mean to say all men were equal in color, size, intellect, moral development and social capacity. They, with tolerable distinctness, express in what respects they did consider all men created equal—equal with "certain inalienable rights among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

The world has never had a good definition of the word "liberty," and the American people just now are much in want of one. We all declare for liberty; but in using the same word, we do not all mean the same thing. With some, the word "liberty" may mean for each man to do as he pleases with himself and the product of his labor; while with others, the same word may mean for some men to do as they please with other men and the product of other men's labor. Here are two, not only different, but incompatible

things, called by the same name—liberty. And it follows that each of the things is, by the respective parties, called by two different and incompatible names—liberty and tyranny.

The shepherd drives the wolf from the sheep's throat, for which the sheep thanks the shepherd as his liberator, while the wolf denounces him for the same act as the destroyer of liberty, especially as the sheep was a black one. Plainly, the wolf and the sheep are not agreed upon the definition of the word "liberty"; and precisely the same difference prevails today among us human creatures, even in the North, and all professing to love liberty. Hence we behold the process by which thousands are daily passing from under the yoke of bondage hailed by some as the advance of liberty, and bewailed by others as the destruction of all liberty . . . Our defence is in the spirit which prized liberty as the heritage of all men, in all lands everywhere. Destroy this spirit and you have planted the seeds of despotism at your doors. Familiarize yourselves with the chains of bondage and you prepare your own limbs to wear them. Accustomed to trample on the rights of others, you have lost the genius of your own independence and become the fit subjects of the first cunning tyrant who rises among you.

With Lincoln, "superiority" of race neither justified the act of subjugation nor excused the plea of "beneficence." It seems to me, he held that every individual of every race and creed should have an equal opportunity for developing his God-given talents free from the tyranny of man or government.

Apropos are the words of Edgar Eugene Robinson in his recent book, *American Democracy in Time of Crisis*, page 63. Dr. Robinson states:

No American leader has done more to make American democracy mean a social heritage of priceless worth. America stands today almost alone of great peoples in its belief in liberty of conscience, freedom of speech and of press, and the *high importance of equality of opportunity*. Lincoln did valiant service in making it so. We surely need—in our present hour of national crisis—the vigor of such intellectual and moral strength as was his. . . . (Emphasis mine).

Regarding his reputation as a story-teller, Lincoln said:

I believe that I have the popular reputation of being a story-teller, but I do not deserve the name in its general sense, for it is not the story itself, but its purpose or effect that interests me. I

often avoid a long and useless discussion by others or a laborious explanation on my part, by a short story that illustrates my point of view. So too the sharpness of a rebuke may be blunted by an appropriate story so as to save wounding feelings and yet serve the purpose.

His retorts doubtless served the same purpose as that to Hugh McCulloch, Secretary of the Treasury in Lincoln's second term, when he presented to the President a delegation of New York bankers with the preliminary undertone: "These gentlemen have come on to see me about our new loan. As bankers they are obliged to hold our National securities. I can vouch for their patriotism and loyalty; for, as the good Book says, 'where the treasure is, there will be the heart also,' " to which the President promptly replied: "There is another text, Mr. McCulloch, I remember, that might equally apply—'Where the carcass is there will the eagles be gathered together.' "

A subordinate officer having had trouble with his superior gained an audience with Lincoln at camp near City Point. "Mr. Lincoln," he said, "this morning I went to the general and he threatened to shoot me!" "Threatened to shoot you?" asked Lincoln. "Well," (in lowered voice) "if I were you I would keep away from him; if he threatens to shoot, I believe he would do it."

During the war Lincoln was annoyed by *soi-disant* advisers. One asked, "How many soldiers have the Confederate States in the field?" "About one million two hundred thousand," replied the President. "Oh, not so many, surely, Mr. Lincoln." "They have fully twelve hundred thousand, no doubt of it. You see, all of our generals when they get whipped say the enemy outnumbered them from three to five to one, and I must believe them. We have four hundred thousand men in the field, and three times four makes twelve,—don't you see it?"

Many of his witty counter-replies have been passed on to us. His retort to Mr. Hunter during the *River Queen* conference in December, 1864, is typical and outstanding: Francis P. Blair, Sr., had an interview with Jefferson Davis, who expressed desire for peace "between the two countries." President Davis appointed three commissioners to proceed to General Grant's headquarters to confer with Secretary Seward regarding reconciliation. Lincoln dictated to Seward the following three conditions upon which alone the United States Government would be reconciled:

1. The restoration of the National Authority throughout all the States.

2. No receding by the executive of the United States on the slavery question from the position assumed thereon in the late annual message to Congress, and on preceding documents.

3. No cessation of hostilities short of an end of the war and the disbanding of all forces hostile to the Government.

Lincoln left Washington, D. C., January 22, 1864, to participate in the conference which took place on the *River Queen* at Hampton Roads. An account of the interview, said to have been written by Alexander H. Stephens, ends with a Lincoln anecdote:

The three Southern gentlemen met Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Seward, and after some preliminary remarks the subject of peace was opened. Mr. Stephens, well aware that one who asks much may get more than he who confesses to humble wishes at the outset, urged the claims of his section with that skill and address for which the Northern papers have given him credit. Mr. Lincoln, holding the vantage ground of conscious power, was, however, perfectly frank, and submitted his views almost in the form of an argument . . . Davis had on this occasion, as that of Mr. Stephens' visit to Washington, made it a condition that no conference should be had unless his rank as Commander or President should first be recognized. Mr. Lincoln declared that the only ground on which he could rest the justice of war—either with his own people, or with foreign powers—was that it was not a war for conquest, for that the States had never

been separated from the Union. Consequently he could not recognize another government inside of the one of which he alone was President; nor admit the separate independence of States that were yet a part of the Union. "That," said he, "would be doing what you have so long asked Europe to do in vain, and be recognizing the only thing the armies of the Union have been fighting for."

Mr. Hunter made a long reply to this, insisting that the recognition of Davis' power to make a treaty was the first and indispensable step to peace and referred to the correspondence between King Charles I and his Parliament, as a trustworthy precedent of constitutional rule treating with rebels. Mr. Lincoln's face then wore that indescribable expression which generally preceded his hardest hits, and he remarked: "Upon questions of history I must refer you to Mr. Seward, for he is posted in such things and I don't pretend to be right. My only distinct recollection of the matter is that Charles lost his head."

The result of this conference and Lincoln's re-election were the final blows to the hopes of the Confederate States for peace through compromise. It seems, for the greater part, the people adhering to the Federal Government were assured of Lincoln's able leadership, and rallied to his support in the Presidential election of 1864. He received a majority of 212 electoral votes as against 21 for McClellan, Democratic candidate, and a popular majority of 411,281.

After the election Lincoln said: "It is no pleasure to me to triumph over anyone but I give thanks to the Almighty for this evidence of the people's resolution to stand by free government and the rights of humanity." During the Senatorial campaign at Beardstown he expressed the same spirit, ". . . while pretending no indifference to earthly honors, I do claim to be actuated in this contest by something higher than anxiety for office. I charge you to drop every paltry and insignificant thought for any man's success—it is nothing—I am nothing—Judge Douglas is nothing. But do not destroy that immortal emblem of humanity—the Declaration of American Independence."

While the war was raging Lincoln pardoned many prisoners who were sentenced to be shot. His clemency

brought harsh protest from court-martial officers. Some complained that he would "destroy all discipline among the soldiers."

There were distressing cases among those violators of military authority. In one instance Lincoln said to Schuyler Colfax, Speaker of the House, who was an entreator, "Some of our generals complain that I impair discipline and subordination in the army by my pardons and respites. It makes me rested after a hard day's work, if I can find some good excuse for saving a man's life, and I go to bed happy as I think how joyful the signing of my name will make him, and his family and his friends." Regarding a number of pardoned Pennsylvania draft resisters, he said, "I have in that order . . . alleviated the distress of many a poor soul whom I never expect to see. When a man is sincerely penitent for his misdeeds, and gives satisfactory evidence of the same, he can safely be pardoned, and there is no exception to the rule."

15

It has been said that "Abraham Lincoln belongs to the common people of every land." Surely, "the plain common people," the oppressed, the struggling, laboring masses of any age never had a greater champion in the realm of executive leadership. He said, "God must love the common people, He made so many of them!" "You can fool all the people some of the time and some of the people all the time but you can't fool all the people all the time." His concern for the common people was not diminished by his rise to power and fame. He said, "Inasmuch as most good things are produced by labor it follows that all such things ought to belong to those whose labor has produced them. But it has happened in all ages of the world that some have labored, and others, without labor, have enjoyed a large proportion of the fruit. This is wrong, and should not continue. To secure to each laborer the whole product of his labor as nearly as possible is a worthy object of any good government."

This spirit found expression in his attitude toward slaves :

In giving freedom to the slaves we assure freedom to the free,—honorable alike in what we give and what we preserve. As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of democracy. Whatever differs from this, to the extent of the difference, is no democracy. Allow all the governed an equal voice in the government; that, and that only, is self government. This is a world of compensation and he who would be no slave must consent to have no slave, and those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves, and under a just God cannot long retain it.

Evidently Lincoln's aversion to slavery increased as the years passed. It is recorded that in the Matson Slave Trial at Charleston in October, 1847, he represented a slaveholder, who sought to regain a Negro woman and her children who had fled. Fortunately Lincoln lost:¹ was he chiefly interested in the question of legality?

Lincoln became true to the spirit and tradition of such stalwart pioneers as Samuel Sewall who in the seventeenth century said: "Originally and naturally, there is no such thing as slavery, because all men, as they are the sons of Adam, are Co-heirs; and have equal Rights unto Liberty and all other Comforts of Life." Upon such humanitarian declarations rested the foundation of the transition from public human traffic to true representative government in our Republic.

Lincoln summed up his convictions concerning slavery in his speech at Peoria, October 16, 1854. He said:

This declared indifference, but, as I must think, covert zeal for the spread of slavery, I cannot but hate. I hate it because of the monstrous injustice of slavery itself. I hate it because it deprives our republican example of its just influence in the world; enables the enemies of free institutions with plausibility to taunt us as hypocrites; causes the real friends of freedom to doubt our sincerity and especially because it forces so many really good men among ourselves into open war with the very fundamental principles of civil liberties, criticising the Declaration of Independence and insisting that there is no right principle of action but self-interest. In our greedy chase to make profit of the Negro, let us beware lest we cancel and tear to pieces the white man's charter of freedom.

It has been said that when Lincoln entered Richmond the day after it was taken, he stopped to rest after walking some distance. Nearby, bowing low with bare head, an old Negro prayed. Lincoln removed his own hat and bowed in silence: typical fraternal chivalry in a life which ex-

¹ See Beveridge's comprehensive account. (*Life of Lincoln*)—L. O. R.

pressed democracy, equality, and inclusive human brotherhood.

This tall, angular man was masterful in self-control—aloof from the course of those “that [were] given to pleasure, that [dwelled] carelessly.” The invisible demons which possess and overcome nearly all human beings—those subtle demons which encompass mankind—covetousness, malice, depravity, arrogance, were vanquished by this man as he toiled on through the extraordinary period in which he lived.

Recent figures indicate that the American Negro has made creditable progress in professional fields since Emancipation. Data for the year 1934 show that more than 100,000 Negroes in this country have been classed as professionals, including college professors, ministers, physicians, musicians, lawyers, and judges. Ebenezer Basset, apparently, was the first Negro appointed to public office by the authority of the United States. Chosen by President Grant in 1869, Basset became consul-general to Haiti.

Though Lincoln severely condemned the abuse and exploitation of the lowly he stood firm for law and order. In addressing the Young Men’s Lyceum at Springfield, January 1838, on “The Perpetuation of our Political Institutions,” he decisively condemned mob law. Evidently the subject was suggested by several lynchings and mob outrages which had taken place in the South, particularly in Mississippi. He said:

There is no grievance that is a fit object of redress by mob law. In any case that may arise, as, for instance, the promulgation of abolitionism; one of the two is necessarily true—that the thing is right within itself, and therefore deserves protection of all law and all good citizens; or it is wrong, and, therefore, proper to be prohibited, by legal enactment; and in neither case is the interposition of mob law either necessary, justifiable, or excusable.

Again regarding law and order in his "Ballots vs. Bullets" address delivered to a delegation at Springfield that proposed to go to the Kansas Territory in physical defense of freedom in 1856, Lincoln said:

If you have the majority, as some say you have, you can succeed with the ballot, throwing away the bullet. You can peaceably then redeem the Government, and preserve the liberties of mankind, through your votes and voice and moral influence. Let there be peace. In a democracy where a majority rule by the ballot through the forms of law, the physical rebellions and bloody resistances are radically wrong, unconstitutional, and are treason. "Better bear the ills you have than to fly to those you know not of." Our own Declaration of Independence says that the Government long established, for trivial causes shall not be resisted. Revolutionize through the ballot-box and restore the government once more to the affections and hearts of men, by making it express, as it was intended to do, the highest spirit of justice and liberty. Your attempt, if there be such, to resist the laws of Kansas by force, is criminal and wicked; and all your feeble attempts will be follies, and end in bringing sorrow on your heads, and ruin the cause you would freely die to preserve.

Eulogies of Lincoln come from many sources and many lands. From Rome was sent an engraved stone with the Latin inscription:

TO ABRAHAM LINCOLN,
PRESIDENT FOR THE SECOND TIME OF THE
AMERICAN REPUBLIC,
CITIZENS OF ROME PRESENT THIS STONE,
FROM THE WALL OF SERVIUS TULLIUS,
BY WHICH
THE MEMORY OF THESE ASSERTORS OF LIBERTY
MAY BE ASSOCIATED. 1865.

After the assassination of Lincoln, expressions of sympathy were sent from many parts of the world, "in not less than twenty-five languages." In recent years written contributions of esteem have multiplied, among which are touching tributes by former Southern Confederates of distinction.

Jusserand, the French Ambassador, at the Memorial exercises held at Springfield, Illinois, February 12, 1909, said:

Lincoln's instinct, his good sense, his personal disinterestedness, his warmth of heart for friend and foe, his high aims, led him through the awful years of anguish . . . They led him through the worst and through the best hours, and that of triumph found him none other than what he had ever been before, a man of duty, the devoted servant of his country, with deeper furrows on his face and melancholy in his heart. And so, after having saved the nation, he went to his doom and fell, as he had long foreseen, a victim to the cause for which he had fought . . .

Bryce, the English Ambassador, said:

Lincoln . . . embodied all that was best and highest in people's minds. His life is more eloquent than any words. Nothing that we can say or do can add to his glory. . . . He was one of those who are a perpetual glory, not merely to the State which sent him to the Presidential chair, not merely to the nation which owned him as its guide and leader, but also to humanity, because he was one of those in whom the love of justice and the love of freedom burn with an unquenchable flame.

Katsuji Debuchi, the Japanese Ambassador, commends:

Lincoln is not only a great American, he is a great man of the world. He bequeathed ideals upon which all humanity might ponder. He taught lessons which mankind, whether East or West, must take to heart. Lincoln fought a novel battle, which so far as he was concerned, involved no personal ambition and excluded any idea of self-glorification or even the glorification of his country.

Today we must have his ideals, the welfare of humanity. Today we can approach that ideal by following in Lincoln's path to secure friendly cooperation throughout the world. While maintaining the freedom and independence of each nation, we must approach the solution of our common problems in a spirit of unity.

Chengting T. Wang, the Chinese Ambassador, commented in a message to me:

Abraham Lincoln is one of the few Americans whose name and fame have spread to China. His prophetic pronouncement "that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth" has struck a responsive chord in the hearts of the Chinese people. . . .

David Lloyd George affectionately said:

I doubt whether any statesman who ever lived sank so deeply into the hearts of the people of so many lands as Abraham Lincoln did. I am not sure that you in America realize the extent to which he is also our possession and our pride. His courage, fortitude, patience, humanity, clemency, and trust in the people, his belief in democracy, and, may I add, some of his phrases in which he gave expression to those attributes will stand out forever as beacons to guide troubled nations and their perplexed leaders. Resolved in war, he was moderate in victory. Misrepresented, misunderstood, underestimated, he was patient to the last. But the people believed in him.

In life he was a great American. He is an American no longer. He is one of those giant figures, of whom there are few in history who lose their nationality in death. They are no longer Greek, or Hebrew, or American—they belong to mankind. I wonder whether I will be forgiven for saying that George Washington was a great American, but Abraham Lincoln belongs to the common people of every land.

Ludwig, the German author, wrote:

Lincoln's career, more than that of any other man in history, is so grandly conceived by fate that the first act is illuminated by the last, and every scene is bound together by dramatic destiny.

I see him like one of Shakespeare's characters absolutely original, comparable to none, immemorably unique. He has fascinated me for years, and if some good may be found in this effort of mine [book] it has sprung from a personal sympathy which I have never felt so strongly for any other great man of history.

John Drinkwater comments:

Abraham Lincoln, pioneer, citizen, country lawyer, astute politician, and incorruptible statesman, stands readily enough in the alert imagination as a new symbol of regenerative power. Already, half a century after his death, the mind of man perceives in this single-hearted champion of a moral idea a figure to whom all sorrows and ambitions may be brought, a touchstone by which every ideal of conduct may be tried, a witness for the encouragement of the forlornest hope.

In the presence of thousands of reverential men, women and children, at the rededication of the reconstructed Lincoln Tomb and Monument at Springfield, June 17, 1931, Dr. John Thomas in invocation said: "... Unitedly we express our thanks for Abraham Lincoln; for the faith he possessed, the work he achieved, and the inspiration his life has been to the sons of men . . . "

President Hoover, in his speech at the tomb, said:

The eternal principles of truth, justice and right, never more clearly stated than by Lincoln, remain the solvent for the perplexities and problems of every day and age. It is to those who, like Lincoln,

have made these principles serve the needs of mankind that the world pays its homage . . .

Monseigneur Torrent offered these words in benediction:

Oh God, the Creator and Father of nations, as of individuals, whose providence has ever watched over us, both individually and nationally, and has provided for us in every crisis of our history, great men, worthy and capable, to steer the ship of state into safe channels and right ways: Omnipotent Father, who provided Washington that we might become a nation, and Lincoln that we might remain one undivided nation, we, who have inherited the fruits of their heroic lives, thank Thee for the blessings which Thou hast sent to us through them . . .

The Roman Catholic Archbishop, McClosky, of the Reconstruction period, indicated that the great need was "the sentiments of mercy and conciliation that so filled the heart [of Lincoln]."

The following tribute is from the pen of Rabbi Irving Frederick Reichert:

In all the constellations of our national heroes, no figure is so lovingly enshrined as that of Abraham Lincoln . . . The passing years have fortified his memory against that quick oblivion which is the tragic destiny of temporary stars. The searching rays of history . . . throw far down the centuries the shadows of true giants. Our Martyred President was such a gaunt colossus.

. . . Lincoln had certain characteristics not unfamiliar to the Jewish experience. Like Hillel, the great President of the Sanhedrin, he was a rail splitter. His fiery passion for righteousness stamps him as a spiritual kinsman of the Hebrew Prophets—the hands were the hands of Lincoln, but the voice was the voice of Abraham.

The historic value of great men is that they speak not alone to their contemporaries, but admonish posterity as well. How apt today is this excerpt from one of Lincoln's letters to his old friend, Joshua Speed:

"Our progress in degeneracy appears to me to be pretty rapid. As a nation we began by declaring 'All men are created equal, except Negroes.' When the Know-nothings get control it will read 'All men are created equal except Negroes, foreigners, and Catholics.' When it comes to this, I shall prefer emigrating to some country where they make no pretense of loving liberty—to Russia, for

instance, where despotism can be taken pure, and without the alloy of hypocrisy . . . ”

Congress might well devote the birthday of this greatest American to hearing again the stirring inspiration of his eloquence.

Professor T. V. Smith, a prominent Democratic Congressman, said recently in a speech in Springfield:

No man made great by death offers more hope to lowly pride than does this Abraham Lincoln; for while living he was himself so simple as often to be deemed a fool. Foolish he was, they said . . . in pitting his homely ignorance against Douglas, brilliant, courtly and urbane; foolish in setting himself to do the right in a world where the day goes mostly to the strong; foolish in dreaming freedom for a long-suffering folk that the North is as anxious to keep out as the South was to keep down; . . . foolish, finally, in presuming that government for the people must be government of the people and by the people. This Lincoln whom so many living friends and foes alike deemed foolish, hid his bitterness in laughter; fed his sympathy on solitude; and met recurring disaster with whimsicality to muffle the murmur of a bleeding heart. Out of the tragic sense of life he pitied where others blamed; bowed his own shoulders with the woes of the weak; endured humanely his little day of chance power; and won through death what life disdains to bestow upon such simple souls—lasting peace and everlasting glory.

How prudently we proud men compete for nameless graves, while now and then some starveling of fate forgets himself into immortality.

After some apparently justified adverse criticism, Archibald Rutledge concludes:

As far as I can ascertain, speaking as a Southerner, and speaking with all sincerity, Lincoln's attitude toward Southern people was what we expect from a man great of heart. If he did not do all that might have been done, the power that limited him was mortal fallibility, not meanness. In the hours of triumph, while others talked of bloody reprisals, executions, merciless vengeance, President Lincoln would have none of these. Over and over he kept repeating, "Judge not that ye be not judged." . . . Of Jackson he said: "He is a brave, honest Presbyterian soldier. What a pity it is that we should have to fight such a gallant fellow!" On the last day of his life, looking at the portrait of General Lee, he said: "It is the face of a noble, brave man. I am glad that the war is over at last."

I for one believe in the sincerity of these utterances. They are healing, reconciling; and I believe that they may be accepted as characteristics of Lincoln's spirit.

Had Lincoln lived, the South believes that he would have been swift to bury every blade forever. He would have relegated hatred to the hell whence it always rises. Of bitterest enemies he would have made friends. Quite incalculable would have been his power to reconcile; he would have made it easy to obey the law of love. Upon the torn heart of the South I know he would have laid, for blessing and for healing, his gentle, mighty, gnarled, and loving hand. When the war was over it would have been *done*, had Lincoln lived. Yet, thank God, his spirit survives; and if that spirit cannot make this country, from Canada to the Gulf and from one ocean to the other, affectionately *one*, I know of no other almighty solvent so persuasive, so noble, and so powerful.

For that most sacred hall of fame which is the loving heart of the American people, not the North nor the South but the whole nation, presents to a grateful posterity Abraham Lincoln and Robert E. Lee. . . .

I can say with an honest heart that a victory for the South could have conferred no loftier heritage than is conferred by the defeated valor of Lee and Jackson; and that I am glad that out of it all came peace and reunion, and the American nation.¹

It was pleasing to note the manifestation of the kinship of humanity in the large statue of Lincoln in the wooded square facing Westminster Abbey in London, and again on the wall in the Victor Hugo museum in Paris where the autographed picture of the Sangamon County Circuit Lawyer greets wayfarers from many lands; and there are the records in the great libraries in Europe and throughout the world where commoners are honored. Thus America and the "Old World" perpetuate the names of world citizens who were benefactors to mankind.

¹ "A Southerner Views Lincoln," *Scribner's*, February, 1928.

Not only was Lincoln acutely conscious of himself as a reality but he was equally conscious of his obligation in relation to the vital problems he faced. This consciousness he clearly expressed in many ways. In his farewell address at Springfield, he said: "I now leave . . . with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington . . . " Again in his first inaugural address: "I have the most solemn [oath] to 'preserve, protect, and defend' [the Union]!" And, in a special message to Congress, July 4, 1861: "As a private citizen, the executive could not have consented that these institutions shall perish; much less could he, in betrayal of so vast and so sacred a trust as these free people have confided in him . . . "

Lincoln valued sincerity of purpose. He revered eminent contemporaries and men of history who stood firm on principle. He spoke affectionately of our first national hero as "Our Washington . . . The Father of his Country. In solemn awe pronounce the name and in its naked, deathless splendor leave it shining on."

The record of Abraham Lincoln needs no defense, particularly from my pen, though I am constrained to comment briefly upon some remarks that seem to over-emphasize Lincoln's weakness in citing incidents of the Civil War period as derogatory to the President. *Exempli*: " . . . the appointment of Burnside over McClellan's head," because of political pressure?—According to Lincoln's knowledge McClellan had failed on previous occasions to prove himself a great general, and was removed from

command during the Virginia campaign because of his lack of alertness. He, with 87,000 men, had allowed Lee, with 40,000, to slip away in the night. Then, too, Burnside had, preceding the "appointment," attacked and gained some advantage which naturally recommended him for promotion. However, Burnside proved to be rather an amicable failure, and resigned after being in command but a short time—from November till January (1862-3). "Ben" Butler was no figurehead. The land troops under this general, supported by Farragut, took possession of New Orleans following the famous battle on the Mississippi, although after this he was "bottled up" at Bermuda Hundred. He received no special countenance. These generals were all serving on merit, and "Fighting Joe Hooker" who succeeded Burnside soon gave way to General Meade, et cetera.

According to Charles F. Benjamin, in *Century War Book*, Lincoln was influenced by the pressure (instigated by Salmon P. Chase) of expectant beneficiaries in the Hooker appointment. Doubtless this was a concession by Lincoln to align the Northern factions. Secretary Chase's apparent designs seem to have been ignored. The President's letter to General Hooker makes clear there was no surrender of fidelity to the welfare of the Union. The following message characterizes Lincoln's beneficence and firmness:

Executive Mansion, Washington, D. C.,
January 26, 1863.

Major General Hooker.—General: I have placed you at the head of the army of the Potomac. Of course I have done this upon what appears to me to be sufficient reasons; and yet I think it best for you to know that there are some things in regard to which I am not satisfied with you. I believe you to be a brave and skillful soldier, which of course I like, I also believe that you do not mix politics with your profession, in which you are right. You have confidence in yourself, which is a valuable, if not indispensable, quality. You are ambitious, which, within reasonable bounds, does good rather than harm; but I think that, during General Burnside's command of the army, you have taken counsel of your ambition, and

thwarted him as much as you could, in which you did a great wrong to the country, and to a most meritorious and honorable brother officer. I have heard in such a way as to believe it, of your recent saying that both the army and the government needed a dictator. Of course, it was not for this, but in spite of it, that I have given you the command. Only those generals who gain success can be dictators. What I now ask of you is military success, and I will risk the dictatorship. The government will support you to the utmost of its ability, which is neither more nor less than it has done and will do for all commanders. I much fear that the spirit which you have aided to infuse into the army, of criticizing their commander and withholding confidence from him, will now turn upon you. I shall assist you as far as I can to put it down. Neither you nor Napoleon, if he were alive again, could get any good out of an army while such a spirit prevails in it. And now, beware of rashness. Beware of rashness, but, with energy and sleepless vigilance, go forward and give us victories.

Yours very truly,

A. LINCOLN.

Were the grounds for removal of these noted generals based on Lincoln's superficial understanding of their cases? He seems to have surmised sophism in his official advisers, but blamed stupidity in generalship for failures. Evidently the President had no inkling that, as some writers claim, key men in his own War Department may have contributed to General McClellan's failure, and that they probably were working to the disadvantage of his successors. Did Secretary Edwin M. Stanton and Henry W. Halleck, General in Chief, fail to cooperate with the subordinate generals?

After the resignation of General Winfield Scott, October 21, 1861, Lincoln appointed General George Brinton McClellan as Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the United States. While in authority his practice seems to have been more procrastination than action. He was removed from his high command, reappointed and removed again, finally, by the President. On July 11, 1862, Major-General Henry W. Halleck was assigned to command the whole land forces of the Federal Army.

Though a man of good qualities, of distinguished service under General Scott in the Mexican War, McClellan's personal letters to his wife, and his record in the field as general reveal egotism, inaction, and mediocrity.

After various commanders, schooled in military strategy, had failed, a rather obscure though technically trained man directed the armies on to victory. Grant was fifteen years younger than Lee—both were graduates of West Point, and both died at the age of sixty-three.

Lincoln had no intimate favorites in his Cabinet nor on his military staff, and though he gave jobs to friends he granted no patronage to unscrupulous politicians. It seems he selected men for their proficiency, several of whom were openly opposed to some of his arbitrary decrees. He was forbearing with opposition; compassionate with misdemeanor; had faith in the ultimate good of humanity; was friend to the eminent and lowly. He met subtlety with frankness; affront with humor or silence. He was hopeful in dilemma, constant and temperate, and trusted God in the most distressing circumstances. There were the vexing steamer *Trent* affair, England's disregard for her proclamation of neutrality, and the offensive acts of Napoleon III.

The Cameron appointment indicates a reward to the Pennsylvania delegation that helped secure Lincoln's nomination in 1860. Opposition to Secretary Cameron caused Lincoln to regret his selection. As the Secretary of War seemed an easy prey for unscrupulous exploiters, doubtless Lincoln and many others were relieved after Cameron's resignation and appointment as Minister to Russia.¹

¹ See William E. Barton's excellent work, *The Life of Abraham Lincoln* (Bobbs-Merrill Co.)—L. O. R.

Perhaps Lincoln was over trustful, in view of the well-founded suspicion that prevailed among high, contemporary politicians. To the contenders regarding the Cameron case Lincoln said, "I shall give him an opportunity of explaining any part he may have had in the transactions alleged against him . . . If the charges against him are proven, he cannot have a seat in my Cabinet, as I will not have any man associated with me whose character is impeached."

As to the Emancipation Proclamation being "... directly counter to the Constitution he was fighting to uphold," we should examine the contingency of this war measure which was not solitary. The Civil War President was moderate in exercising the war-time authority with which he was vested, and, while he was opposed to the institution of slavery, he respected the legal rights of the slaveholders that were at peace with the Union. It is common knowledge that his drastic proclamation applied only to the slaves in the States that were in rebellion against the Federal Government.¹ There may have been an idea that this act would provoke a widespread slave insurrection in the South which would contribute to the success of the Northern armies. Perhaps it was diplomacy to exempt the border States in this proclamation to avoid serious political consequences resulting in the loss of much military support. Lincoln mentioned this probability. In any case it indicates that Lincoln would not have interfered with slavery in time of peace without constitutional authority; and it was one year, eight months, and two weeks after his call for volunteers before he finally issued or promulgated the Emancipation Proclamation. Preceding this, on September 13th, he said to a deputation of ministers who pressed for immediate

¹ The others were freed December 18, 1865, by the Thirteenth Amendment.—L. O. R.

emancipation: " . . . I do not want to issue a document that the whole world will see must be inoperative, like the Pope's bull against the comet. Would my word free the slaves, when I cannot even enforce the Constitution in the rebel States? . . . " This extreme provision, the President's constitutional prerogative, was advised by the military leaders who argued its necessity in the struggle to preserve the Union.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, Lincoln sanctioned (under the order of General Burnside) the arrest of the Ohio Congressman, Clement Vallandigham, Copperhead wing leader of the Democratic party of 1863, and denied this "wily agitator" a customary and constitutional trial. The President arbitrarily suspended the writ of *habeas corpus*, and disregarded the contention of Chief Justice Taney that the "privilege of the writ could not be suspended except by Act of Congress."

Lincoln commuted Vallandigham's sentence of confinement in Ft. Warren to banishment, and authorized Rosecrans to secretly escort him, under a flag of truce, over the Confederate line where he was placed in charge of a rebel picket. This "man without a country" ran the blockade, by permission of the Confederacy, landed in Canada, and, a few months later, returned to the United States where he again violently attacked the Administration's war policy. Lincoln was forbearing and did not permit his re-arrest. Perhaps the President thought his hostile opponent might do more harm in prison than out. Whatever the idea relating to the case, Vallandigham was finally accorded the right of scathing "free speech." The press, too, was rather free despite the suppressive attitude of Burnside and his aggressive adherents though some radical newspapers were suppressed.

President Lincoln, in explaining his emergent overriding position, said:

Of how little value the constitutional provisions I have quoted will be rendered, if arrests shall never be made until defined crimes shall have been committed, may be illustrated by a few notable examples. General John C. Breckinridge, General Robert E. Lee, General Joseph E. Johnston, General John B. Magruder, General William B. Preston, General Simon B. Buckner, and Commodore Franklin Buchanan, now occupying the very highest places in the rebel service, were all within the power of the government since the rebellion began, and were nearly as well known to be traitors then as now. Unquestionably if we had seized and held them, the insurgent cause would be much weaker. But no one of them had then committed any crime defined by law. Every one of them, if arrested, would have been discharged on *habeas corpus*, were the writ allowed to operate. In view of these and similar cases, I think the time not unlikely to come, when I shall be blamed for having made too few arrests rather than too many. . . . Long experience has shown that armies cannot be maintained unless desertion shall be punished by the severe penalty of death . . . Must I shoot a simple-minded soldier-boy who deserts, while I must not touch a hair of a wily agitator who induces him to desert?

Despite England's violation of Queen Victoria's proclamation of neutrality, that country, with most of the European powers, was favorably impressed by Lincoln's "master stroke," the Emancipation Proclamation. Slavery, at this time, was regarded as an indefensible institution by the leading nations of the world. " . . . It vastly exalted our struggle in the moral estimate of Christendom and lessened danger of foreign intervention."¹

Harry E. Pratt, a Lincoln authority, said, "No politician lives without friends."

Doubtless, Lincoln was influenced by partisan politics, and considered recommendations for appointments favorably in some cases if it could "be done consistently with the public service." The following letter seems to express his general attitude:

¹ (E. Benjamin Andrews, *History of the United States*, Vol. IV, p. 187). The foregoing paragraph, et al, indicate that many sincere people have considered the "master stroke" a philanthropic act though it did not free all the slaves in the country.—L. O. R.

Executive Mansion,
Washington, July 12, 1862

Adj.-General Thomas

Please see Col. Farnsworth and restore his man, as he will request, if it can be done consistently with the public service.

A. LINCOLN.

Lincoln seems to have granted no special favors, knowingly, to intriguing politicians, and though he officially placed a number of political friends he appointed men for their proficiency, several of whom had expressed opposition to some of his edicts, and had opposed his re-election. He was rather an independent executive, as Secretary Seward implied when he said, "There is but one vote in the cabinet and that is cast by the President." Lincoln's "middle course" was a definite purpose to serve the people of his country, and, evidently, he never yielded to clandestine politics. As Archibald Rutledge, a noted Southerner, indicates, " . . . If he (Lincoln) did not do all that might have been done, the power that limited him was mortal fallibility, not meanness. . . . "

It seems the political "pay-off" job has invariably been an evil in our governmental system, though the "plum" seeker is hardly so influential in support of a candidate as the conscientious citizen who is actuated by ideals and constructive policy. It is quite certain that Lincoln, in common with other politicians, had political debts to pay, but he, like outstanding statesmen, seems to have handled the "obligations" commendably.

The people in general recognize, and Lincoln declared, his mortal propensity to err. As stated previously, he said, "I claim not to be more free from errors than others—perhaps scarcely so much." He wrestled with anxiety, and forged ahead with rectitude during the trying ordeal of Civil War while resolved to preserve the integrity of the Republic. He earned the honorary designation, "Honest Abe."

As Rhodes has said, . . . "His truthfulness, honesty and self-abnegation make better men of the students of his words and deeds and we all experience a moral uplifting in the contemplation of his character." He seems not to have been inspired by personal ambition so much as by the crying need of his country. He placed welfare before privilege, as indicated in a masterly satiric open letter (evidently unanswered) to an insinuating accuser when candidate for re-election to the Legislature.

New Salem, June 12, 1836

Dear Colonel:

I am told that during my absence last week you passed through the place and stated publicly that you were in possession of a fact or facts which, if known to the public, would entirely destroy the prospects of N. W. Edwards and myself at the ensuing election; but that through favor to us you would forbear to divulge them. No one has needed favors more than I, and generally few have been less willing to accept them; but in this case favor to me would be injustice to the public, and therefore I must beg your pardon for declining it. That I once had the confidence of the people of Sangamon County is sufficiently evident; and if I have done anything, either by design or misadventure, which if known would subject me to a forfeiture of that confidence, he that knows of that thing and conceals it is a traitor to his country's interest.

I find myself wholly unable to form any conjecture of what fact or facts, real or supposed, you spoke; but my opinion of your veracity will not permit me for a moment to doubt that you at least believed what you said. I am flattered with the personal regard you manifested for me; but I do hope that on mature reflection you will view the public interest as a paramount consideration and therefore let the worst come.

I assure you that the candid statement of facts on your part, however low it may sink me, shall never break the ties of personal friendship between us.

I wish an answer to this, and you are at liberty to publish both if you choose.

Very respectfully,

A. LINCOLN.

Colonel Robert Allen.

Lincoln has been criticized by sophistic critics regarding his raiment and etiquette. Such ridiculous comments raise the question: Who is qualified to dictate the customs of the people? Some ostentatious writer has said that "Lincoln's duster was not always immaculate!" Anyone who has lived in Central Illinois, and has traveled over the dirt roads of the country, and forged ahead in their business there in the face of mud, dust, humidity, and sweat will readily see the foppery behind such disparaging remarks. However, Abraham Lincoln was a man, not a fop. The tailor's model did not interest him. He was not affected by priggish conventionalism but was concerned with the problems of humanity, and it was his faithful pursuance of a policy designed to solve the major problems of his time that demonstrated his greatness.

Through the manifold circumstances of his life Lincoln was humane and deliberate, rather than dogmatic, in his reactions toward the problems that affected his fellow creatures. He said, "Why should there not be a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the people? Is there any better or equal hope in the world?" As Paul M. Angle stated, "The overwhelming personality of Lincoln . . . his manner of approaching a question is worth emphasizing. He took all the factors of a situation into account."

From boyhood, Lincoln refrained from harmful and degrading habits, according to reports of those who were associated with him. He never gambled, and he had an intense abhorrence for the liquor traffic. Herndon quoted Lincoln as saying, "I never drink much and am entitled to no credit therefor, because I hate the stuff." Robert Todd Lincoln wrote: "My father never used tobacco in any form." Herndon said that Lincoln "never smoked or chewed tobacco." At a celebration of Washington's birthday, at the Second Presbyterian Church, Springfield, February 22, 1842, Lincoln spoke of the "Temperance Revolution." He said:

. . . Whether or not the world would be vastly benefited by total and final banishment from it of all intoxicating drinks seems to me not now an open question . . . the demon intemperance ever seems to have delighted in sucking the blood of genius and generosity. What one of us but can call to mind some relative more promising in youth than all his fellows, who has fallen a sacrifice to his rapacity? Of our political revolution of '76 we are justly proud. It has given us a degree of political freedom far excelling that of any nation of the earth.

Turn now to the temperance revolution. In it we shall find a stronger bondage broken, a viler slavery manumitted, a greater tyrant deposed . . .

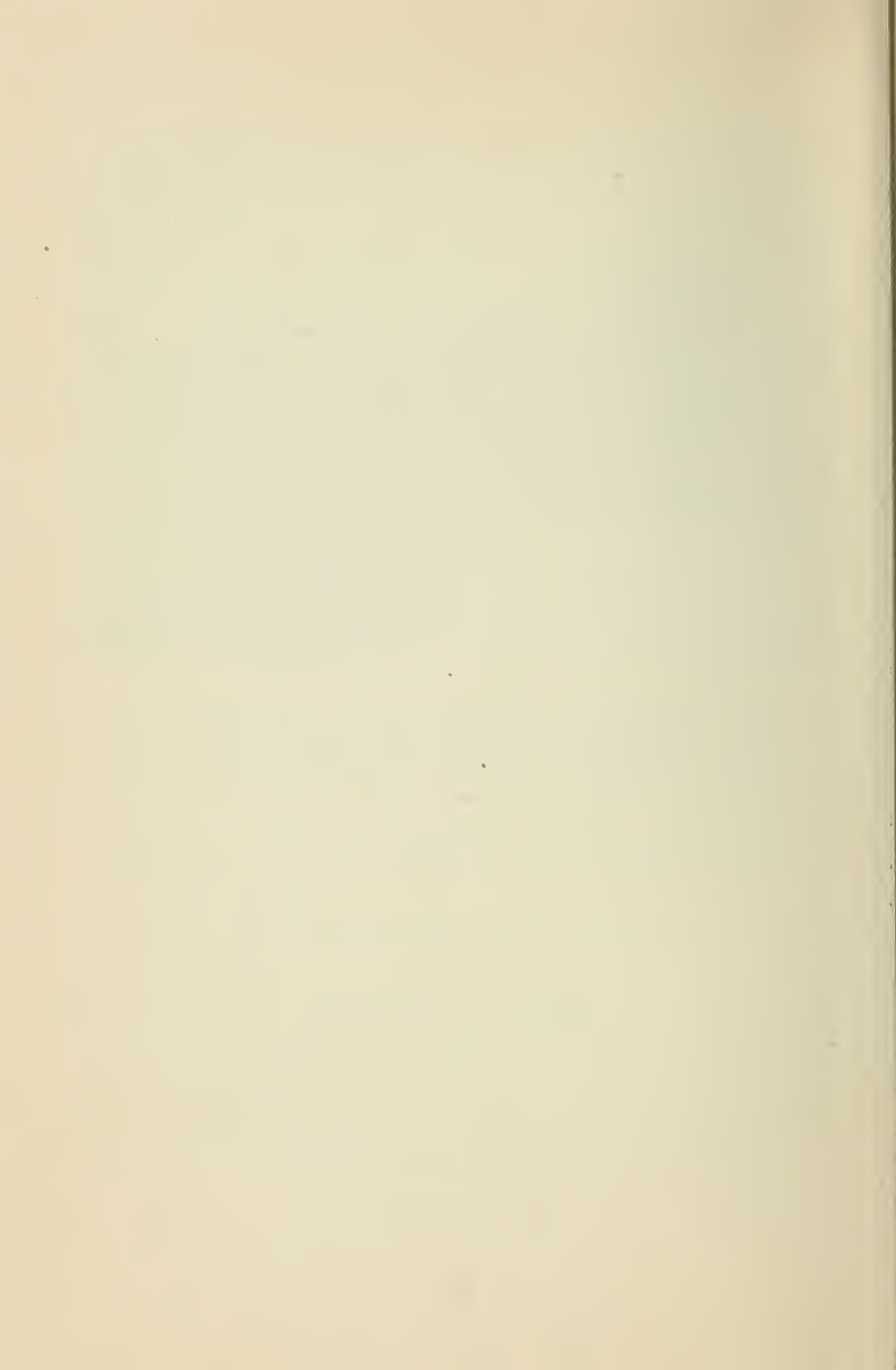
And when the victory shall be complete,—when there shall be neither a slave nor a drunkard on the earth—how proud the title of that land, which may truly claim to be birthplace and cradle of both those revolutions that shall have ended in that Victory! How nobly distinguished that people, who shall have planted and nurtured to maturity both the political and moral freedom of their species!

Thus he expressed his love for freedom and sobriety.



Courtesy of George R. Trainor, Sr.

The old Chinquapin Bridge that spanned the Sangamon,
adjacent to the Herndon farm, south end view.



The files of R. W. Diller, late Springfield druggist, indicate that Lincoln purchased brandy in June, 1859. This the "wets" try to capitalize. Nevertheless, the Diller record may be accounted for creditably. Brandy has been used for other purposes than the debilitating one of beverage. Milton H. Shutes, M. D., in his book *Lincoln and the Doctors*, page 60, tells of Lincoln's experience at the Floyd House in Quincy after his sixth debate with Douglas. Lincoln was exhausted and was urged to take a "rum sweat" by the management. He declared that he never drank a drop in his life. But upon being assured that it was an external treatment recommended, he submitted. Surely the witness of his associates and his outspoken condemnation of alcoholic liquor establish the fact that Lincoln had no sympathy with the traffic. In an address before the Washingtonian Society, concerning brandy, he said:

"Physicians prescribe it in this, and the other diseases, . . . the victims of it are to be pitied and compassionated just as heirs of consumption and other hereditary diseases." Again he said in the case of "The State of Illinois against Mr. Whiskey": "The good of society demands its suppression." And again: "The liquor traffic is a cancer in society eating out the vitals and threatening destruction, and all attempts to regulate it will aggravate the evil. There must be no attempt to regulate a cancer; it must be eradicated, not a root left behind, for until this is done all classes must continue in danger of becoming victims of strong drink." . . . "Liquor may have defenders but no defence."

Abraham Lincoln had a profound sense of duty toward, and an abiding faith in God. When grievously tried by Civil War problems, he said:

I am driven to my knees over and over again by the overwhelming conviction that I have nowhere else to go . . .

It is the duty of a nation as well as of men to own their dependence

upon the overruling power of God, to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon, and to recognize the sublime truth announced in the Holy Scriptures, and proven by all history, that "those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord."

We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven. We have been preserved, these many years, in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown: but **WE HAVE FORGOTTEN GOD**. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace, and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to God that made us.

It behooves us then to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness.

* * *

Speaking of the Bible, and of its ennobling influence upon Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt said:

Lincoln . . . built up his entire reading upon his early study of the Bible.

You may look through the Bible, from cover to cover, and nowhere will you find a line that can be construed into an apology for the man of brains who sins against the light. On the contrary, in the Bible, taking that as a guide, you will find that because much has been given you, much will be expected of you; and a heavier condemnation is to be visited upon the able man who goes wrong than upon his weaker brother who cannot do the harm that the other does, because it is not in him to do it.

I plead not merely for training of the mind, but the moral and spiritual training of the home and the church; the moral and spiritual training that has always been found in, and that have ever accompanied the study of this book; this book, which, in almost every civilized tongue, can be described as "The Book," with the certainty of all understanding you when you so describe it.

The immense moral influence of the Bible, though, of course, infinitely the most important, is not the only power it has for good. In addition there is the unceasing influence it exerts on the side of good taste, of good literature, of proper sense of proportion, of simple and straightforward writing and thinking.

This is not a small matter in an age when there is a tendency to read much that, even if not actually harmful on moral grounds, is yet injurious, because it represents slipshod, slovenly thought and work; not the kind of serious thought, of serious expression, which we like to see in anything that goes into the fibre of our character.

The Bible does not teach us to shirk difficulties, but to overcome them. That is a lesson that each one of us who has children is bound to honor, to teach these children, if he or she expects to see them become fitted to play the part of men and women in the world.

If we read the Bible aright we read a book which teaches us to go forth and do the work of the Lord; to do the work of the Lord in the world as we find it; to try to make things better in this world, even if only a little better, because we have lived in it. That kind of work can be done only by the man who is neither a weakling nor a coward, by the man who, in the fullest sense of the word, is a true Christian—like Great Heart, Bunyan's hero. We plead for a closer and wider and deeper study of the Bible, so that our people may be in fact as well as in theory "doers of the word, and not hearers only."

In the summer of 1864 Lincoln said to his guest, Joshua Speed, "Take all of this Book on reason that you can, and the balance on faith, and you will live and die a happier man."

Previously he had said, "The Bible, after all, is the only book that tells the truth about people."

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It seems Lincoln's central purpose, as a statesman, during his early political career was to prevent, by legislation, the extension of the institution of slavery. He declared:

On the Territorial question I am inflexible . . . There is no way of putting an end to the slavery agitation amongst us but to put it back upon the basis where our fathers placed it,—no way but to keep it out of our Territories—to restrict it forever to the old States where it now exists. Then the public will rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction.

The major task which Lincoln set forth to accomplish when elected to the Presidency in 1860 was to preserve the integrity of the Federal Government,—to avert the subdivision of the Union into non-cooperative hostile States. He said: "I hold that in contemplation of Universal law and the Constitution, the Union of these States is perpetual . . . The States have their status in the Union and they have no other legal status."

His opinion seems to have changed after his speech when in Congress, January 12, 1848:

Any people anywhere, being inclined and having the power, have the right to rise up and shake off the existing government, and form a new one that suits them better. This is a most valuable, a most sacred right—a right which, we hope and believe, is to liberate the world. Nor is this right confined to cases in which the whole people of an existing government may choose to exercise it. Any portion of such people, that *can*, may revolutionize, and make their *own* of so much of the territory as they inhabit.

Who of us can censure the Confederacy for taking this position?

During his first inaugural address he said:

I do not forget the position assumed by some, that constitutional questions are to be decided by the Supreme Court; nor do I deny that such decisions must be binding, in any case, upon the parties to a suit, as to the object of that suit, while they are also entitled to a very high respect and consideration in all parallel cases, by all other departments of the Governments. And while it is obviously possible that such decisions may be erroneous in any given case, still, the evil effect following it being limited to that particular case, with the chance that it may be overruled, and never become a precedent for other cases, can better be borne than could the evils of a different practice. At the same time, the candid citizen must confess that if the policy of the government, upon vital questions affecting the whole people, is to be irrevocably fixed by decisions of the Supreme Court, the instant they are made, in ordinary litigation between parties in personal action, the people will have ceased to be their own rulers, having to that extent practically resigned their government into the hands of that eminent tribunal.

He affirmed:

There is an important sense in which the Government is distinct from the administration. One is perpetual; the other temporary and changeable. A man may be loyal to his Government and yet oppose the peculiar principles and methods of the administration.

Censorious factions have questioned the merit of our Republic: Was it worth preserving? Lincoln's opinion was: "Our national heritage is worth the keeping . . . The free institutions we enjoy have developed the powers and improved the conditions of our whole people beyond any example in the world."

"In the light of history" we find no constitution directing the affairs of the State superior to that of "that government of the people, by the people, for the people," under which the majority *may* rule, and through which redress from autocratic measures may be secured by constitutional franchise. Our experimental government does not function perfectly; notwithstanding, we should consider, with

gratitude to our forefathers, that our democracy embodies within its Constitution the essential principles whereby its people, through legislation, may provide for their social and economic welfare.

Lincoln, in his distinctive style, makes clear this constitutional supremacy of the people in political power. In his inaugural address, delivered March 4, 1861, at Washington, D. C., he said:

This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing government, they can exercise their constitutional right of amending, or their revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow it. I cannot be ignorant of the fact that many worthy and patriotic citizens are desirous of having the national Constitution amended. While I make no recommendation of amendment, I fully recognize the full authority of the people over the whole subject, to be exercised in either of the modes prescribed in the instrument itself and I should, under existing circumstances, favor rather than oppose a fair opportunity being afforded the people to act upon it.

Democracy, with all its faults, embodying the economic principles of the Rochdale cooperative movement, offers the best form of government ever devised for all the people. Highly developed capitalism subordinates the welfare of the populace. The citizens of a totalitarian State have no legal control over the whims of the dictator. The ruthless recurrent march of empire is ever an ominous challenge to the moral and spiritual forces in every land—a disquieting trend to all who value representative government. Amid the widespread barbarity of our time, we may hope and *live* for the dawn of justice, peace and goodwill among all the races of the earth. In the darkest hours we can be assured that fundamental truths are not altered by the acts of mortals. With Tennyson we cry, “Oh! When shall all men’s good be each man’s rule, and universal peace lie like a shaft of light across the land?”

Regarding danger to America, Lincoln said, "If it ever reaches us it must spring up amongst us; it cannot come from abroad. If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of free men we must live through all time, or die by suicide." He admonished to ". . . turn this government back into the channel in which the Constitution originally placed it," that America represent, "not the terror but the encouragement of mankind." He said, "The people of the United States are masters of both Congress and courts, not to overthrow the Constitution, but to overthrow the men who pervert the Constitution." . . . "All honor to Jefferson—the man, who, in the concrete pressure of a struggle for national independence by a single people, had the coolness, forecast, and sagacity to introduce into a merely revolutionary document an abstract truth, applicable to all men and all times, and so embalm it there that today and in all coming days it shall be a rebuke and a stumbling block to the very harbingers of reappearing tyranny and oppression." . . . "Reason—cold, calculating, unimpassioned reason—must furnish all the materials for our support and defence. Let these materials be molded into general intelligence, sound morality and, in particular, a reverence for the Constitution and laws; and then our country shall continue to improve and our nation, revering his name, and permitting no hostile foot to pass or desecrate his resting-place, shall be the first to hear the last trump that shall awaken our Washington.

"Upon these let the proud fabric of freedom rest as the rock of its basis, and as truly as has been said of the only greater institution, 'The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.'"

The Lincoln Memorial, on the bank of the Potomac, at Washington, D. C., is impressive in its simplicity. The structure is considered by master architects to be the most magnificent and classically perfect memorial in the world. It has thirty-six exterior Doric columns representing the thirty-six States in the Union at the time of Lincoln's death. It faces a large rectangular lagoon and, beyond, the tall, white marble obelisk (555 feet high) which honors Washington, and farther in the distance the Federal Capitol can be seen. The classic crystalline rock memorial to Lincoln is the embodiment of dignity and repose. On the inner walls to the right and left of the massive, marble figure (by Daniel Chester French), are immortal words from his Gettysburg and second inaugural addresses:

FOUR SCORE AND SEVEN YEARS AGO, OUR FATHERS
BROUGHT

FORTH ON THIS CONTINENT A NEW NATION, CONCEIVED
IN LIBERTY AND DEDICATED TO THE PROPOSITION THAT
ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL.

NOW WE ARE ENGAGED IN A GREAT CIVIL WAR, TESTING
WHETHER THAT NATION OR ANY NATION,
SO CONCEIVED AND SO DEDICATED CAN LONG ENDURE.
WE ARE MET ON A GREAT BATTLE FIELD OF THAT WAR.
WE HAVE COME TO DEDICATE A PORTION OF THAT FIELD
AS A FINAL RESTING-PLACE FOR THOSE WHO HERE GAVE
THEIR LIVES THAT THAT NATION MIGHT LIVE. IT IS
ALTOGETHER FITTING AND PROPER THAT WE SHOULD DO
THIS.

BUT IN A LARGER SENSE, WE CANNOT DEDICATE, WE
CANNOT
CONSECRATE, WE CANNOT HALLOW, THIS GROUND. THE
BRAVE MEN, LIVING AND DEAD, WHO STRUGGLED HERE,
HAVE

CONSECRATED IT, FAR ABOVE OUR POWER TO ADD OR
DETRACT. THE WORLD WILL LITTLE NOTE NOR LONG
REMEMBER WHAT WE SAY HERE; BUT IT CAN NEVER
FORGET

WHAT THEY DID HERE. IT IS FOR US, THE LIVING,
RATHER, TO BE DEDICATED, HERE, TO THE UNFINISHED
WORK WHICH THEY WHO FOUGHT HERE HAVE THUS FAR
SO NOBLY ADVANCED.

IT IS RATHER FOR US TO BE HERE DEDICATED TO THE
GREAT TASK REMAINING BEFORE US; THAT FROM THESE
HONORED DEAD WE TAKE INCREASED DEVOTION TO THAT
CAUSE FOR WHICH THEY GAVE THE LAST FULL
MEASURE OF DEVOTION; THAT WE HERE HIGHLY
RESOLVE THAT THESE DEAD SHALL NOT HAVE DIED IN
VAIN;

THAT THIS NATION UNDER GOD SHALL HAVE A NEW BIRTH
OF FREEDOM, AND THAT GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE,
BY THE PEOPLE, FOR THE PEOPLE,
SHALL NOT PERISH FROM THE EARTH.

(November 19, 1863)

WITH MALICE TOWARD NONE, WITH CHARITY FOR ALL,
WITH FIRMNESS IN THE RIGHT AS GOD GIVES US TO
SEE THE RIGHT,

LET US STRIVE ON TO FINISH THE WORK WE ARE IN,
TO BIND UP THE NATION'S WOUNDS,
TO CARE FOR HIM WHO SHALL HAVE BORNE THE BATTLE,
AND FOR HIS WIDOW AND HIS ORPHAN—
TO DO ALL WHICH MAY ACHIEVE AND CHERISH A JUST
AND LASTING PEACE AMONG OURSELVES AND WITH
ALL NATIONS.

(March 4, 1865)

The birthplace of Lincoln, three miles south of Hodgenville, Kentucky, is a gentle wooded elevation carpeted with native bluegrass. A stone stairway of fifty-six steps, signifying Lincoln's age at death, leads to the original site where a memorial of pleasing appearance shelters the log cabin (reduced in size) in which Lincoln was born. On the inner stone wall of the memorial are inscriptions relating to Lincoln—one by Maurice Thompson runs:

HE WAS THE NORTH, THE SOUTH, THE EAST, THE WEST,
THE THRALL, THE MASTER ALL OF US IN ONE.

THERE WAS NO SECTION THAT HE HELD THE BEST,
HIS LOVE SHONE AS IMPARTIAL AS THE SUN.
AND SO REVENGE APPEALED TO HIM IN VAIN
HE SMILED AT IT, AS AT A THING FORLORN
AND GENTLY PUT IT FROM HIM ROSE AND STOOD,
A MOMENT'S SPACE IN PAIN
REMEMBERING THE PRAIRIES AND THE CORN
AND THE GLAD VOICES OF THE FIELD AND WOOD.

Lincoln's Monument in Oak Ridge Cemetery at Springfield, Illinois, marks the final resting place of the material remains of the martyred Civil War President. This granite spire (116 feet high, from the cement walk around the monument to the top) overlooks his beloved valley of the Sangamon, and is visited annually by thousands of persons. In 1928, 141,040 signatures appear on the book; in 1934, there were 113,000; in 1935, 112,500; in 1936, 118,440; in 1937, 128,020; in 1938, 128,520; in 1939, 121,840; in 1940, 155,120; in 1941, 214,160; in the war, gas-rationing years, 1942, 143,000; in 1943, 67,250; and in 1944, 108,300 visitors registered at this shrine of common men.¹ Mr. H. W. Fay informs me that "there were 3,320 guests registered at Lincoln's Tomb for February 1940. This is the same number as registered in (the same month) 1939, which is a strange coincidence."

The remodeled interior is a credit to the designer, C. Herick Hammond, State Architect. On the north circular frieze are the words:

NOW HE BELONGS TO THE AGES

(From the Illinois State Journal, December 10, 1942)

THOUSANDS ARE ATTRACTED
TO LINCOLN SHRINES

Nine foreign countries, a number of the Canadian provinces, and all forty-eight states of the Union, were represented in November on the registers at Springfield's two Lincoln shrines, the Lincoln

¹ As Mr. Fay explained, not all visitors registered in any year.
—L. O. R.

tomb, and Abraham Lincoln home, George W. Williams, superintendent of state parks, said yesterday.

Despite travel restriction and inclement weather, these memorials continue to attract thousands, nearly 16,000 having registered at the Lincoln tomb during the past month.

Contributions received from individuals, associations, and States for the original construction of the monument amounted to some \$120,000, of which over \$8,000 was given by colored people.

Following are the closing words of a sermon by Henry Ward Beecher delivered a week after the death of Lincoln:

Give him his place, oh, ye prairies! In the midst of this great continent his dust shall rest, a sacred treasure to myriads who shall pilgrim to that shrine to kindle anew their zeal and patriotism. Ye winds that move over the mighty places of the West, chant his requiem! Ye people, behold a martyr whose blood, as so many articulate words, pleads for fidelity, for law, for liberty!

The refined monument stands on the verge of a wooded bluegrass slope "on a grassy hill beside a quiet brook," above a beautiful glen where the clear water of lagoons reflects the exquisite beauty of the woodlands. Wild violets add their fragrance to the many flowers all about. Oak Ridge is a sanctuary for various song birds which gladden the natural verdure-clad vistas with their melody. The bluebird, oriole, lark, and cardinal are there; the wood-thrush, wren, and tanager, and many of their kindred with their song and grace and flash of color; and in summer twilight the plaintive, tranquilizing call of the mourning dove, whippoorwill, and vesper sparrow may be heard. There, four generations of my people await the Eternal Morning in the shadow of the granite spire. A hallowed charm pervades the woodland paths with the varied glory throughout the year. What a fitting place for the tomb of the great Commoner whose ideals form a link between man in his earthly groping and the things eternal.

* * *

Incredible questions have been asked about Abraham

Lincoln by some American tourists. Some have asked, "Are there any of the old rail fences, which Lincoln built in Kentucky, still standing?" Herbert Wells Fay, custodian of the Lincoln Tomb, told me that a visitor had asked him if Lincoln "really had been a *circus* rider!" Mr. Fay said that one day a few years ago a distinguished appearing man arrived in a Lincoln car having with him a colored driver in faultless uniform. When asked if he had any questions the man replied that he had read everything written about Lincoln and was familiar with every incident of his life. "Of course," said Mr. Fay, "it was a pleasure to meet such a man, and as we were about to ask some of the questions that had baffled the research of the biographers, he said, 'Yes, there is one question I would like to ask, and that is what were the Lincoln-Douglas debates about?'"

In the autumn of 1937 while my daughter, Elsie, and I were visiting Lincoln's birthplace in Kentucky, a handsome, well-dressed young man stepped up to John Cissell, the custodian, and asked, in respectful tone, "Did Lincoln build this cabin?" (enshrined there in a memorial of pink granite).

The inscription over the entrance is as follows:

HERE
OVER THE LOG CABIN WHERE ABRAHAM LINCOLN
WAS BORN
DESTINED TO PRESERVE THE UNION AND TO
FREE THE SLAVE
A GRATEFUL PEOPLE HAVE DEDICATED THIS MEMORIAL
TO UNITY, PEACE AND BROTHERHOOD AMONG
THESE STATES

21

A man becomes renowned; he has climbed to the zenith of humanity; then it is that the world tries to define his life. How did he respond to the manifold conditions of his existence? Is his success due to hereditary or environmental factors? Biographers trace his lineage to remote ancestry but the source of his fame baffles the analytical mind.

Is the struggle for life, and the fear of defeat so intense that man does not consider the ultimate result of his conduct? Few men seem to have had the courage to plan their lives, and go forward with a definite purpose in the face of ostracism, and with a consciousness of much material loss. Sublime, altruistic figures have done this: Socrates, it seems, was the first great martyr to intellectual liberty; the divine mission of the lowly Nazarene led to the Cross; Lincoln's career, torn between philanthropy and war, was brought to an end by an assassin; and, today, humanitarians are astounded by the persecution of Mahatma Gandhi who is striving, without violence, for the freedom and equality of his people. But the ideals bequeathed to mankind through the fortitude of these heroic personalities gleam over the dark materialism of the world as guiding stars for all races and conditions of men throughout this transitory pilgrimage.

Our children shall behold his fame,
 The kindly, earnest, brave, farseeing man;
 Sagacious, patient, dreading praise not blame.
 New birth of our new soil, the first American.

—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

Lamentable, verily, for both the North and South was the assassination of Lincoln.

David Starr Jordan, in *Days of a Man*, Vol. I, page 34, states: "A spirit of revenge, foreign to Lincoln himself, was unfortunately, if naturally, aroused by his tragic death. This threw the control of affairs into the hands of the most extreme group, and the lack of any broad mind and moderating heart threatened to leave the Southern question an enduring wound in the history of our country."

The revengeful spirit of the time is expressed in the *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, "We believe that this cruel calamity will be blest by a sterner line of treatment of the slave-holding rebels than the humane and generous heart of Lincoln liked to present."

Sherman's depredations, and the horrors of Andersonville, and of other military prisons North and South created a deep-rooted ill-will. Would a legacy of perpetual hatred be visited upon the children of both sides of the degrading war? Womankind of the old South must be given credit for a supreme act of reconciliation. The placing of flowers by Mississippi women on the graves of both Confederates and Federals some two years after Appomattox inspired Francis Miles Finch to write:

THE BLUE AND THE GRAY

From the silence of sorrowful hours
The desolate mourners go
Lovingly laden with flowers
Alike for the friend and the foe;—
Under the sod and the dew
Waiting the Judgment Day;—
Under the roses the Blue;
Under the lilies the Gray.

Sadly but not with upbraiding,
The generous deed was done;
In the storm of the years that are fading
No braver battle was won:—
Under the sod . .

No more shall the war-cry sever,
Or winding rivers be red;
They banish our anger forever
When they laurel the graves of our dead!
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day;
Love and tears for the Blue,
Tears and love for the Gray.

The spirit of this poem and the motherly expression of forgiveness and good will, of strewing laurels alike on the mounds of departed veterans of the North and South, bridged the gulf of enmity, and led to reunion of the estranged National family.

Lincoln was merciful, and, had he lived to finish his work, doubtless his chief concern would have been to "bind up the nation's wounds," for he was noble in purpose, profound in fidelity to that purpose, and, without reservation, placed his physical and mental capacity upon the altar of service to mankind. He left with the world memories of those sterling qualities that shall be the heritage of the succeeding generations of all time.

On April 11, three days before his assassination, Lincoln, in his last public speech, said:

. . . Concede that the new government of Louisiana is only to what it should be as the egg is to the fowl, we shall sooner have the fowl by hatching the egg than by smashing it . . . What has been said of Louisiana will apply generally to other States . . . In the present situation, as the phrase goes, it may be my duty to make some new announcement to the people of the South. I am considering, and shall not fail to act when satisfied that action will be proper.

At his last Cabinet meeting on the fatal day, April 14, he said:

. . . If we are wise and discreet we shall reanimate the States and get their governments in successful operation, with order prevailing and the Union re-established before Congress comes together in December . . . I hope there will be no persecution, no bloody work after the war is over. No one need expect me to take part in hanging or killing those men, even the worst of them . . . Enough lives have been sacrificed. We must extinguish our resentments if we expect harmony and union. There is too much of a desire on the part of some of our very good friends to be masters, to interfere with and dictate to those States, to treat the people not as fellow-citizens; there is too little respect for their rights. I do not sympathize in these feelings.

Abraham Lincoln is an outstanding personage in the annals of time, and it is natural that he should be judged by men of every walk of life for the part he played in a great national crisis through which a race was liberated, and a nation restored; particularly should we expect the verdict of the posterity of those Americans who went down into the valley of death for the land they loved.

From my perspective I see a grave, heroic figure caught in the toils of destiny in a crucial period; his humane, benevolent spirit darkened by subservience to arms, saddened by the cruel war; his deep, kindly eyes set toward the future; his great, sinewy hand outstretched in benediction over the bowed form of the black man, whose shackles have fallen to the ground; and the integration of that nation, "under God," with "a new birth of freedom," stands

forth radiating constitutional civic equality as an inspired memorial to the man who "gave the last full measure of devotion," as he understood it, for this fulfillment, and "that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

Numerically, by computing from the present administration, 1945, Abraham Lincoln was the central President of the United States of America; in practical wisdom, impartial judgment and courageous endeavor to promote justice, he stands in history as the Central Administrator in American Democracy.

ADDENDA

Citizens of Springfield and visiting admirers of Abraham Lincoln are probably interested in the places where he lived and worked, where his body was received, and where it now reposes; the following localities are marked with bronze tablets:

The National Lincoln Monument and Tomb, Oak Ridge Cemetery, adjoining the city of Springfield, Illinois, to the north—open for visitors, 8 a. m. to 5 p. m. Also other hours by appointment. Mr. H. W. Fay, custodian, is a modest, courteous man and proficient in Lincolniana.

The Lincoln Homestead, Eighth and Jackson Streets, open to the public, 9 a. m. to 5 p. m. This is the only home Lincoln ever owned, though he had acquired some farm land and town lots.

Site of Joshua Fry Speed's general store, 107 South Fifth Street—above this store Lincoln shared Mr. Speed's sleeping room on coming to Springfield in 1837.

Site of Stuart and Lincoln's law office (1837-1841), 109 North Fifth Street.

Site of Logan and Lincoln's law office (1841-1843), 203 South Sixth Street.

Site of Lincoln and Herndon's law office (1843-1865), 103 South Fifth Street.

Site of Second Presbyterian Church, 210 South Fourth Street—here Lincoln attended the first session of the Illinois House of Representatives (1839-1840), following the removal of the Capitol from Vandalia before the sandstone structure "on the square" was ready for use.

Site of the house of Ninian W. Edwards, northwest corner Centennial Memorial Building, just south of the State Capitol—here Abraham Lincoln and Mary Todd were married, November 4, 1842, and here Mrs. Lincoln died July 16, 1882.

Site of Globe Tavern, 315 East Adams Street—here Lincoln and his wife lived from the time of their marriage until May 2, 1844, and here Robert Todd Lincoln was born.

At 528 East Adams Street, in a room on the third floor of this building, Lincoln, in January, 1861, wrote his inaugural address.

Site of the First Presbyterian Church, 302 East Washington Street—here Lincoln, with his family, attended services, 1842-1861.

Site of Illinois State Journal, 116-118 North Sixth Street—here Lincoln first received the news (May 18, 1860) of his nomination for President of the United States.

Sangamon County Court House, located on the city plaza, "Lincoln Square" between Fifth and Sixth, and Washington and Adams Streets; Office, Master in Chancery—this room in the old State Capitol Building was, in 1860, a part of the Governor's office, and was used by Lincoln for public reception.

Sangamon County Court House, Circuit Court Room—this room in the old State Capitol Building was Representatives' Hall, (1840-1876)—here Lincoln delivered his famous "House Divided" speech, June 16, 1858, and in this room his remains lay in state when brought to Springfield for burial in Oak Ridge, May 3-4, 1865.

Wabash Freight House, (now Geo. A. Coe & Co.) Tenth and Monroe Streets—this, in 1861, was the passenger station of the Great Western Railroad—here on the morning of February 11, 1861, Lincoln delivered his farewell address from the rear platform of his car.

Chicago and Alton Railroad Passenger Station, Third and Jefferson Streets—Abraham Lincoln's body was brought to Springfield by a special train, arriving at this station May 3, 1865.

Public Receiving Vault Oak Ridge Cemetery—the body of Lincoln lay in this vault from the day of his funeral, May 4, 1865, until December 21, 1865.

A BRIEF CHRONOLOGY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Abraham Lincoln was born in Hardin County (now Larue), Kentucky, February 12, 1809. The family "removed" into Spencer County, Indiana, 1816, where his mother died, October 5, 1818. Family moved to Macon County, Illinois, in 1830. Abraham's flatboat voyages to New Orleans—1828 and 1831. Went to New Salem, Sangamon County (now Menard), Illinois, in August, 1831. Election Clerk, 1831. He was Captain of Volunteers, private and independent ranger in the Black Hawk War, 1832. Failed in grocery business with intemperate Berry, 1833. Was Deputy Surveyor in Sangamon County, 1833. Postmaster at New Salem from May 7, 1833, till the discontinuance of the office, May 30, 1836. Love romance, 1835, overshadowed by the death of Ann Rutledge. Illinois Legislator four times, 1834, 1836, 1838, 1840. "On the electoral ticket"—1840, 1844, 1856. Admitted to the bar, and moved to Springfield in 1837. Practiced law chiefly from 1837 to 1860. Tilt with General Shields, 1842. Marriage with Mary Todd, November 4, 1842. Elected to Congress, 1846. Attended River and Harbor Convention in Chicago, 1847. Thomas Lincoln, his father, died near Janesville, Illinois, January 17, 1851. Declined the Governorship of the Oregon Territory in 1852, proffered by President Fillmore. Candidate for Senate, 1855; withdrew in favor of Trumbull. Invented boat-raising device, 1856. Last debates with Stephen A. Douglas, 1858. Defeated by Douglas in the Senatorial race of 1858, by the joint ballot in the legislature, though he received a majority of popular votes. Indorsed for Vice President at Bloomington and Philadelphia Con-

ventions, 1859. Nominated for the Presidency May 18, 1860. Grew a beard at the advice of a little girl, Grace Bedell, 1860. Elected President November 6, 1860. Honorary degree of Doctor of Laws conferred by Knox College, 1860. Call for 75,000 volunteers, (to serve three months) April 15, 1861. Recommended to Congress a resolution (adopted in both branches) to compensate any State for abolishment of slavery, March 6, 1862. Emancipation Proclamation (Sept. 22, 1862) finally issued January 1, 1863. Advised colonization of liberated slaves, 1862. Renominated and reelected, 1864. Received degree of LL. D. in 1864 from the College of New Jersey, now Princeton University. Shot by John Wilkes Booth, April 14, 1865. Died April 15, 1865. His stepmother died April 10, 1869. His wife died on July 16, 1882.

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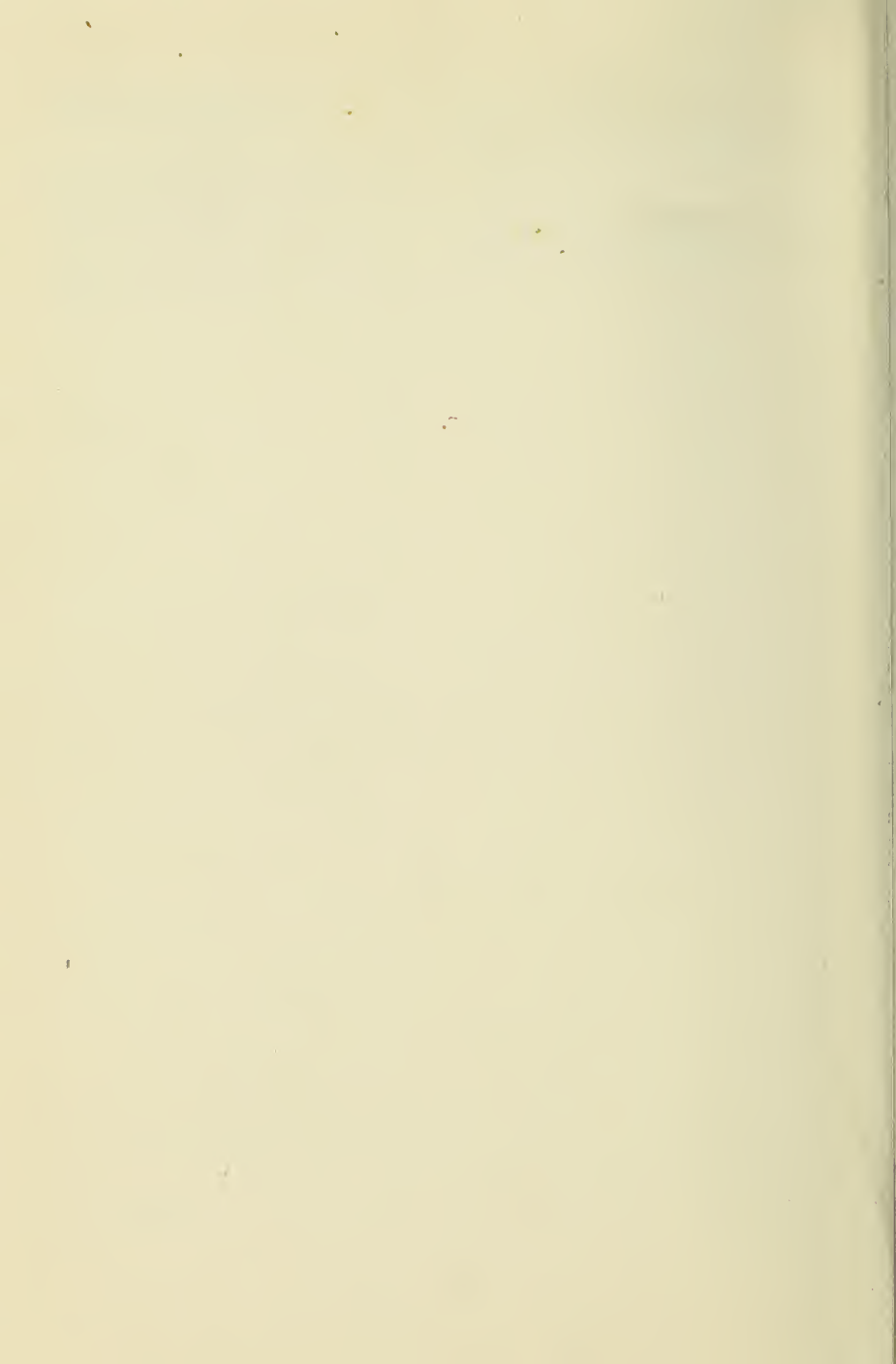
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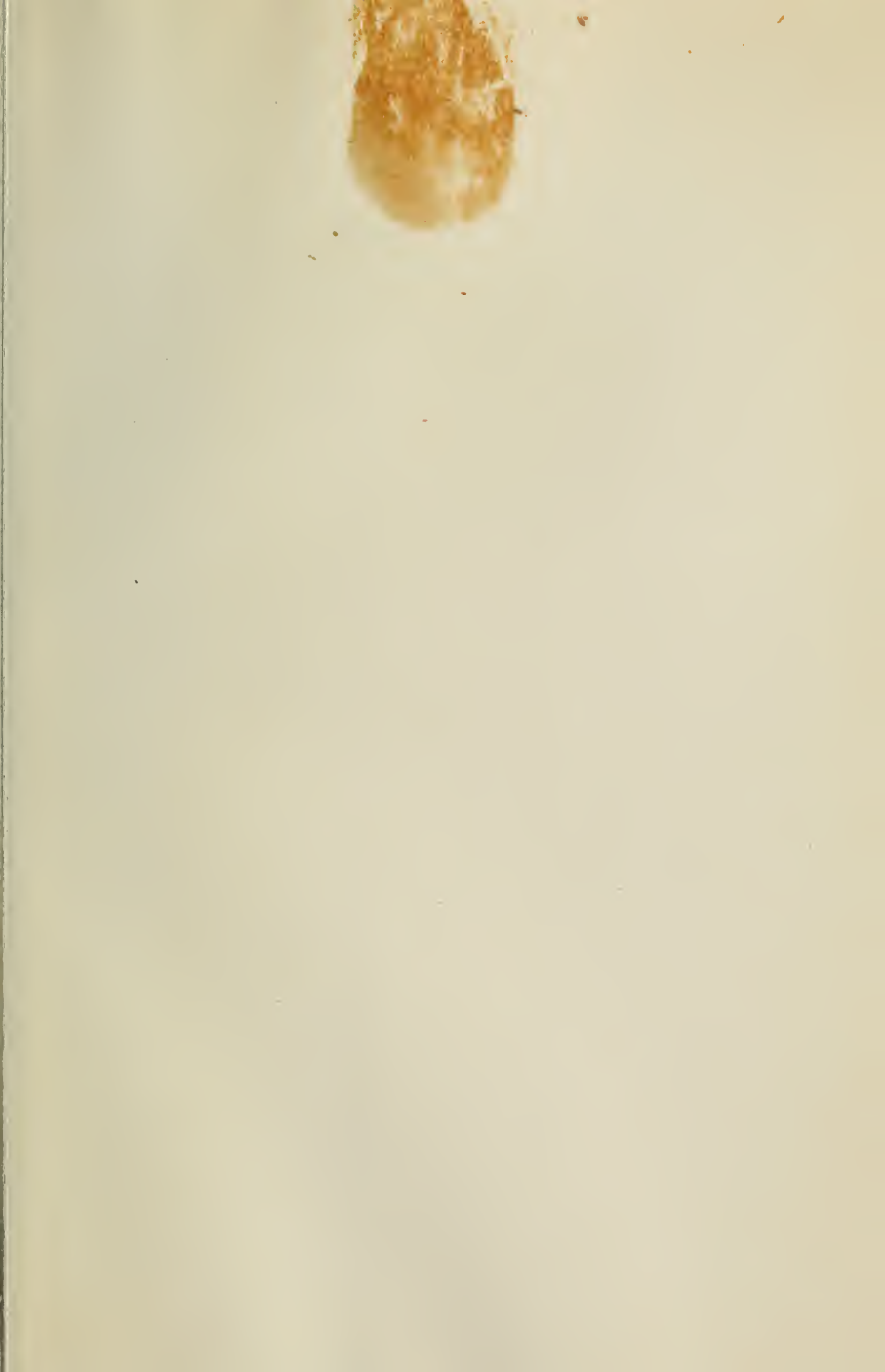
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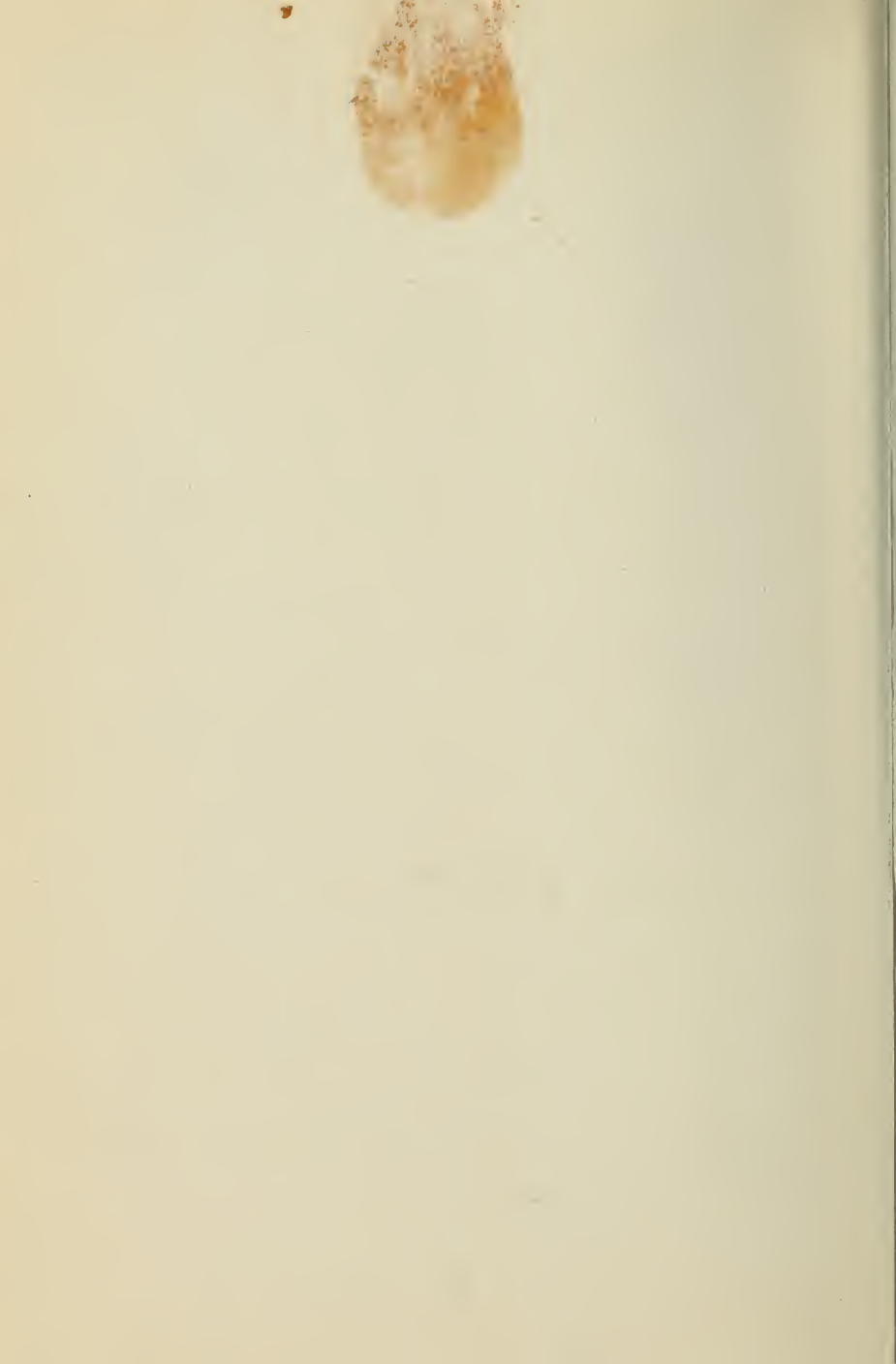
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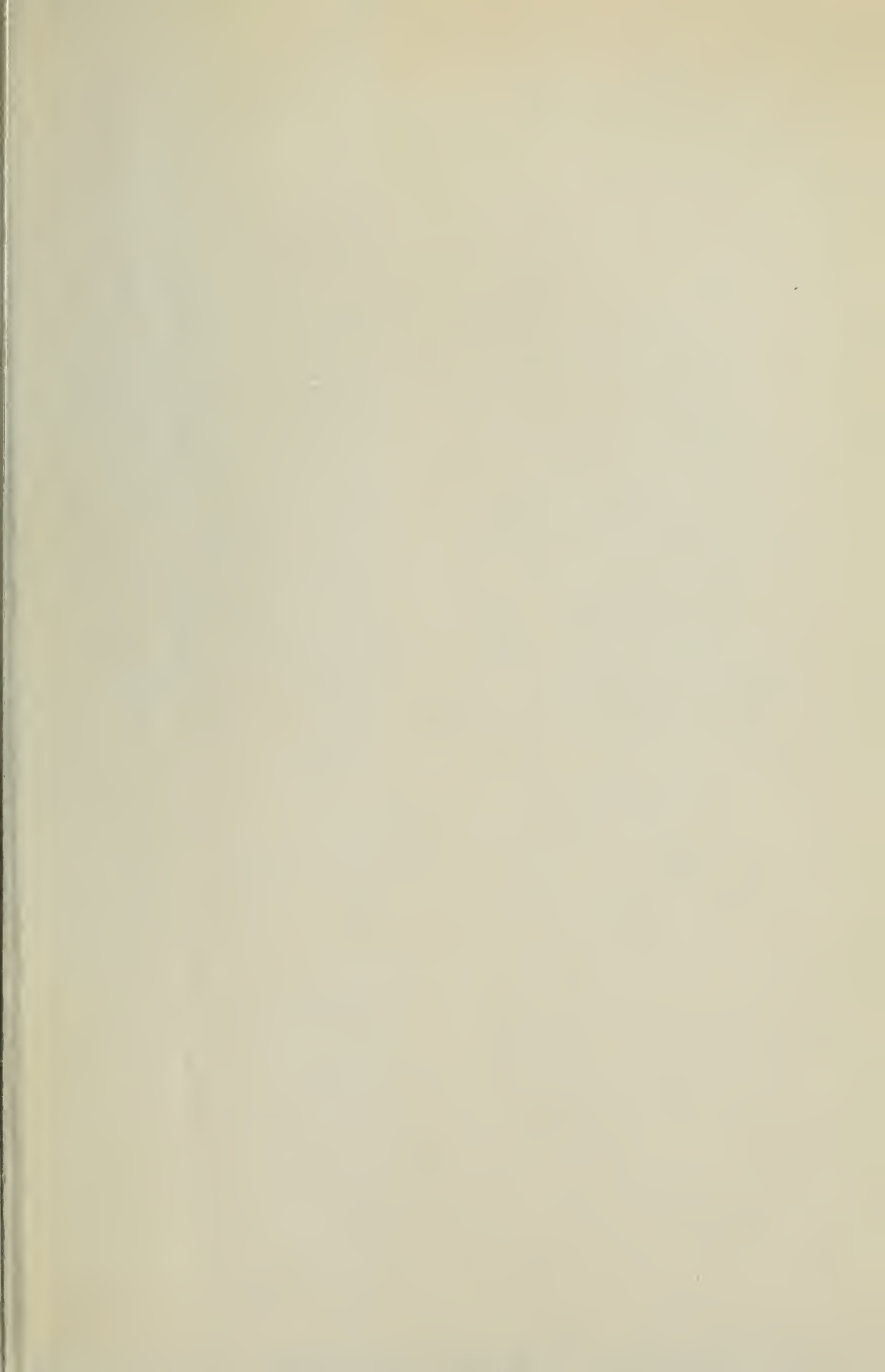
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Worthwhile Reading

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